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A NEW SEA AND AN OLD LAND

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A NEW SEA AND AN OLD LAND

BEING

PAPERS SUGGESTED BY A VISIT TO EGYPT
AT THE END OF 1869

BY

W. G. HAMLEY

COLONEL IN THE CORPS OF ROYAL ENGINEERS



WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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P R E F A C E.

WHEN, in the autumn of 1869, I was invited to visit Egypt, to witness the opening of the Suez Canal, I took account of what I knew of the Old Land. Hitherto I had fancied that my knowledge, though not profound, was tolerably accurate and extensive: examination proved to my chagrin how confused and imperfect it was. So at once I set to work, attempting to verify and supplement unsettled ideas, in the hope to escape even yet the reproach of ignorance when I should mingle with the well-informed world who would flock to the *fêtes*. Arrived in Egypt, great was my surprise to find that hardly anybody was conversant with her past or present, and that my scanty reading enabled me to speak with some confidence on the subject—nay, that I was sometimes referred to as an authority. Seeing this, it was, I hope, no presumption to imagine that there were many in the world who might desire to be taken so far as even I could take them toward a knowledge of Egypt; and hence originated the papers in this volume which treat of history and antiquities.

Thus I have not the smallest pretence to write as a teacher of this profound subject. At the most I can

pretend to have got into a somewhat higher form than very many of my countrymen, who possibly may thank me if I help them to the level that I have reached. On my side I shall be happy if, by raising a curiosity concerning Egyptian history and remains, I can extend the inclination to study them.

The papers describing the opening of the Canal and the sights of Cairo give simply my personal adventures and the reflections which are written in my diary. I had arranged with Mr Blackwood, before I left England, to publish an account of the affair. My residence in Manchester, the headquarters of the Northern District in which I am employed, will account for my correspondent being a magnate of the city of cotton.

The narrative of the journey to Venice, as it takes the reader over deeply-trodden ground, requires some apology. It was written and sent to the Magazine to gratify a longing which I felt to express myself on the subject, and I fear, without sufficient reflection as to whether any one would care to go over the track again in my company. Some pleasant criticisms, which I thankfully acknowledge, have secured it a place in the volume.

From looking back to the brilliant doings at Port Saïd and Ismaïlia, only a few months old, the mind cannot but by an effort return to things present, so much has the scene changed. In Egypt the talk was all of peace and universal brotherhood; the signs

were of goodwill, and of high and beneficent enterprise. France, as the patron of the Canal, had the foremost place among the assembled nations; and France's graceful and gracious Empress, the most noted personage in so great a company, seemed to our short sight the most favoured of beings. At her side the Crown Prince of Prussia, who, in less than a year, was to deal the first of those blows which were mortal to the French Empire, evinced cordial amity and the sense of common enjoyment. It was impossible then to suppose that the next summer would witness one of the bloodiest and most eventful wars that have ever desolated Europe, or that the French Empire could be demolished in two months after swords were drawn. It is but fourteen months since I saw the things of which I write, yet many of them have been thrown back into dimness of the past by the astounding events which have crowded since then to occupy the thoughts of men. Thus the opening of the Canal had scarcely its share of interest. But, though the Continent has changed so greatly, it is once more at peace, and it may be hoped, perhaps, that attention will again be directed to the peaceful subjects from which it was so rudely startled. I trust that there are many who, now tired of ideas of change and strife, will feel it a relief to revert to the old things of Egypt, and to the new work so bravely wrought on her Isthmus.

W. G. H.

March 1871.

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A NEW SEA AND AN OLD LAND.

CHAPTER I.

EGYPT AND THE STORY OF THE SUEZ CANAL.

AN INTRODUCTORY PAPER.


December 1869.

THERE are few minds that will fail to be moved at the mention of Egypt. So closely has that country been connected with all generations of the world, that to have no chord which vibrates at the name argues a low intelligence. Divine teachings, science old and new, history, tradition, fable, war, research, politics, commerce, colonisation—if there be any interest, if there be any pursuit, all own some association with that long-famous land. Nor are its relations with learning and science alone. They are interlaced with everyday life and household words. The Mummies, the Nile, the Pyramids, are nouns familiar even to the unlearned and unwashed. Our bluff countryman for whom, without much knowledge, suffices the faith in England's glory and invincibility, must turn to Egypt

for some favourite instances. He can tell of Alexandria and Aboukir, though unwitting, possibly, of the hemisphere in which they lie.

And now again Egypt asserts her affinity with the active peoples of the world. Another stupendous work upon her soil, wrought by myriads of men, at a cost exceeding the value of many a principality, calls thither the great and talented and enterprising of the earth to celebrate the artificial union of two seas, and to stamp on men's minds the significance of the achievement. It is progress which gives this last prominence ; it is anticipation of an unborn future that attracts the nations. A few days, and the narration of the events on the Isthmus, and speculation on the changes that are to follow, will be all-absorbing. But there is yet an interval of expectation before we turn the page, and it may profit us if, while we wait, we glance back at the wondrous records that lie behind. We will shout to-morrow for the Egypt of the nineteenth century after Christ, but to-day let us ponder over the Egypt of the past—the Egypt of Cheops and Sesostris, of Joseph and Moses—the Egypt of rites, and spells, and monuments, and symbols : marvellous, mystic land !

When we think of the great age of Egypt as a nation, how in her antiquity she stands alone, more venerable than any nation in the world, the truth cannot be grasped without an effort of the mind. Following the lead of the antiquary or the native annalist, we in these islands are lost in the maze of



primitive barbarism when we have reached the Briton and his paint and his edged axle: this is withered eld; this is the beginning of things. But what is this epoch in respect of the old days of Egypt, which had passed her meridian, great in arts and arms, before the Druid or the Pict was heard of! Or if we take the days before England had a history, and mete the eras of Greece and Rome, or even of Assyria, we cannot attain to Egypt's early youth by this measurement. The Jews alone of all the nations of Asia can trace an antiquity approaching that of Egypt: and, even here, how stands the case? When Abram, representing in his single person the Jewish nation of his day, went down into Egypt, Egypt was already a country with a settled government. Egypt is so old that no trace of her youth, and, *a fortiori*, none of her infancy, can be found. She first appears on the page of history armed, learned, subtle, and inscrutable, like Pallas from the brain of Jove! Not only her barbarous and fabulous period is lost to recollection, but the records which she may have left of her early strength have perished from very age. If it be asked, How can antiquity be proved beyond the records of it? the answer is, that the very oldest remains to which we can affix a date are of such a character that they could have been produced by only an advanced and instructed people.

Comparison will be assisted by the insertion of a few dates. It should, however, be premised that the era of Menes, the founder of the Egyptian monarchy,

is taken from the calculation of Mr Osburn, who brings it to a very late year by unsparingly correcting the chronology of others.*

First record of Egypt, 446 years before Abram =	2364 B.C.
Ninus the Assyrian,	2059 B.C.
Abram in Egypt,	1918 B.C.
Supposed date of Homer,	884 B.C.
Romulus,	714 B.C.
Socrates died,	400 B.C.
Cæsar invaded Britain,	55 B.C.

"There is no difficulty," says Mr Kenrick,† "in fixing on the country from which ancient history must begin. The monuments of Egypt, its records and its literature, surpass those of India and China in antiquity by many centuries."

The antiquity of Egypt is, however, only part of the wonder: to complete it her vitality must be taken into account. In the days of Noah, or soon after, she owned the same name and much the same character that she bears to-day. She has seen her vicissitudes, no doubt—she has been triumphant and down-trodden at different times: but while younger nations were all powerful for a season—as witness the Assyrian, the Macedonian, and the Roman empires—and then perished for ever, she has battled with

According to Herodotus, the Egyptian monarchy was founded 11,906 years before the Trojan War. . . . Dr. Rawlinson says in a note to his translation of Herodotus: "The fact was almost a high creative antiquity had no doubt a solid basis of fact. It is probable that a settled monarchy was established in Egypt earlier than in any other country. Herodotus dates the foundation of the Egyptian monarchy 11,906 years before the Trojan War." . . .

* Kenrick's *Antiquities of Egypt*, vol. i. p. 11.

oblivion and obscurity, awoke up to life again after depression, and, like her mummy wheat, outlasting millenniums, has proved the strength of her principle of life !

The conquests of Egypt have been pushed far beyond the bounds of Egypt proper, into Arabia, Judea, Assyria, and Ethiopia. On the other hand, foreigners have conquered and subjugated Egypt. But it would seem as if nature had forbidden the integrity and individuality of Egypt to be affected by these political changes. She did not absorb into the State the countries which she conquered, neither was she denationalised by her invaders. In many instances a native prince was, after the deposition of the legitimate king, set up by the conqueror, subject to the payment of tribute. Where this was not the case, the conquerors conformed to Egypt more than the Egyptians conformed to them, and the foreign invasions altered the native race no more than the Norman settlers, spoliators and rulers though they were, converted the race of these islands from Anglo-Saxon. Taken in connection with these recollections, the attitude of Egypt just now is significant. Twenty years ago she made a great stride towards freeing herself from the rule of Turkey, and she became a separate Viceroyalty. At this moment she is rousing herself to energy, and the memory of her old name and a desire to command respect seem to be animating her and her ruler. Who shall say that before the close of the century there may not be once more

an independent Egypt—the same Egypt which was known to the Patriarchs and the Greeks—vying with European and Asiatic lands in modern arts and modern commerce?

And if Egypt's national life be wonderful, so also is her physical life—and her physical life is the Nile—a name as famous as any that the world can show. Many a river of the earth has had, or has, its distinguishing epithet and its stirring history. Horace, stamping the Hydaspes as *legendary*, traced in that word a title of nobility. But what word or what cluster of words can express the sublime ideas which awaken at the name of the Nile! "Egypt," said Herodotus 2300 years ago, "is the gift of the Nile." Mr Osburn says to-day, "Egypt is the Nile, and the Nile is Egypt." If in pagan days divine honours were ascribed to the Nile, it was for a better reason than could be rendered for most heathen worship. To natural perception the river was the giver of all good things: its favour was health and plenty; the withdrawal of its benefits would be ruin. And its mysteries might well impress and awe the mind. Its beginnings, so men thought, were from everlasting: no one could declare its generation; its course was immeasurable; the waters rose and fell without apparent cause. A time came when the Nile ceased to be divine; but it did not cease, and has not ceased, to be a marvel. Its crocodile is no longer adored, but that and behemoth too are still hallowed by association. In short, to regard the Nile with *sang froid* is




impossible, steel our hearts philosophically as we may. That ark of bulrushes among its flags pictured to our imaginations when reason had scarcely dawned, *will* present itself amid our studies and our researches. Pharaoh's dream, the frogs, and the water of blood, the magicians with their enchantments, the rod of Aaron astonishing the monarch on the river's bank, cannot be driven away from the visible tide. Herodotus and his stories, Cleopatra and her charms, all these memories rush in when we think of the Nile. And this as if the Nile, devoid of interest in itself, required the aid of imagination to give it charm! Nay, the truth is rather that the Nile, in all senses gifted and affluent, and not as other rivers are, superadds a spiritual power to a surpassing natural grandeur. This volume of water which has rolled thus for forty or fifty centuries along a course of 2000 miles, has been and is one of the greatest physical wonders.

Mr Osburn, in his 'Monumental History,' shows us clearly how a daily observation of the Nile affects a visitor from Britain. About the winter solstice the Nile will be found, he tells us, "a magnificent expanse of tolerably clear water, with the blue tinge which also distinguishes the waters of the Rhone as they issue from the Lake of Geneva." The overflow is just past, and the scene is of a fertility and beauty unequalled. "The vivid green of the springing corn; the groves of pomegranate-trees ablaze with the rich scarlet of their blossoms; the fresh breeze laden with

the perfumes of gardens of roses and orange-thickets ; every tree and every shrub covered with sweet-scented flowers : these are a few of the natural beauties that welcome the stranger to the land of Ham. There is considerable sameness in them, it is true, for he would observe little variety in the trees and plants, whether he first entered Egypt by the gardens of Alexandria or the plain of Assouan. Yet it is the same everywhere, only because it would be impossible to make any addition to the sweetness of odours, the brilliancy of the colours, or the exquisite beauty of the many forms of vegetable life, in the midst of which he wanders. It is monotonous, but it is the monotony of Paradise."

But to comprehend the power of the transformation, the Nile must be viewed at midsummer, contracted, turbid, slimy, stagnant, with black sun-cracked mud forming both its shores. All beyond them is sterility and sand, with the forms of trees, dust-coated and scarce distinguishable, withering before the Spirit of the Desert. Thus must nature lie for a season that the reinvigorating power of the flood may have opportunity for beneficence. And lo ! its harbinger, the north wind, cleaving the sandy, burning atmosphere, makes its presence felt. The dust disappears, the colours of nature shine out again, and all is expectation of the next great act. It comes at last. The word is heard from Cairo that the waters are rising, and the first green slimy condition of the augmented stream attests the fact. This



greenness, however, is soon gone, and the waters wax more turbid as the tide advances rapidly. They become at last deep red like a river of blood, opaque and thick, throughout Upper Egypt. This is the Red Nile. The rise goes on now somewhat fitfully but incessantly. The thick opaque character sometimes partially disappears, but the deep-red hue never, during high Nile, until the lower lands are reached, by which time much of the sediment has been deposited.

Along the banks nature a-tiptoe waits for the welcome flood. Indefatigably it spreads itself over the burnt face of the wilderness, and the green herb is possible once more. Dams burst, and obstructions are carried away with a mighty noise, but the sound is not one of terror: all living things know it, and rush to meet the kindly power. And yet, though it comes to bless, its majesty, like the state of Jove, may be dangerous to the rash or improvident: an ill-fenced farm or village will be swept away like a hen-roost; but these are rare accidents. The general feeling is joy. "The men" (these are the words of Osburn, who has all along been followed in the description of the overflow)—"the men, the children, the buffaloes, gambol in its refreshing waters, the broad waves sparkle with shoals of fish, and fowl of every wing flutter over them in clouds. Nor is this jubilee of nature confined to the higher orders of creation. The moment the sand becomes moistened by the approach of the fertilising waters, it is literally

alive with insects innumerable. It is impossible to stand by the side of one of these noble streams, to see it every moment sweeping away some obstruction to its majestic course, and widening as its flows, without feeling the heart to expand with love and joy and confidence in the great Author of this annual miracle of mercy."

By midwinter the river is again running blue within its banks.

And now, ere we pass to the chronicles of Egypt, a few thoughts are due to some important uses to which Providence has been pleased to put this land. Abram, perishing of famine, was led thither and nourished at a time when he was childless, and his death must have frustrated the splendid promises which were to take effect through him. Later on, his descendants, still a small band, preceded by Joseph, found an asylum in Goshen, and multiplied there a peculiar people, although at length evilly entreated. Again, on the banks of Nile the compassion of Pharaoh's daughter reached the little being in whose doomed life were wrapped up, so to speak, the oracles of God, and the deliverance of His people. And, lastly, when another Joseph fled by night from the sword of Herod, and took the young Child and His mother, it was into Egypt that he departed. Thus were the purposes of Heaven and the hope of the world made mysteriously to survive through the shelter of Egypt!

It is impossible, in a paper of the length to which this can reach, to give an historical account, however

meagre, of the country and its government; and yet to say nothing of its annals would be to omit one of the most interesting of the topics proposed for consideration. Perhaps if some well-known epochs in other history be selected, and the measure of Egyptian periods be taken by them as a scale, we may get something of an outline which, filled in with a note or two, may take us irregularly down the stream of Time. For, as the learned reader will not require to be told, the Egyptians, as far as we know, were innocent of dates referring to any well-known era. They have recorded the lengths of reigns, but left it doubtful in regard to some of these whether they were distinct and consecutive, or wholly or partially contemporaneous. The student, therefore, can do no more than determine, to the best of his judgment, the actual succession and chain of kings down to some known date; and then, by means of the chronology so obtained, work back and reduce occurrences to our standard of time. It is an interesting truth, that the old Egyptians left a profusion of records in the forms of tablets, papyrus-rolls, obelisks, pictures, statues, mummy-cases, &c.; and that knowledge of the men and facts to which these relate has by no means reached its fulness, as it was supposed a century ago to have done. On the contrary, the light, eclipsed at that time, seems to have been growing stronger ever since; and not only has knowledge of the most ancient Egyptians increased most remarkably, but there is the best reason to hope that the

means of full and accurate knowledge exist, and that the science of deciphering is all that we want to make us intimately acquainted with this wonderful people and their long-spaced ages. Great learning and acumen have been brought to bear on this alluring subject ; and the regret now seems to be, not that the means of knowledge fail us, but that time and opportunity will not in our day suffice for the use of a modest fraction of the means.

While we were ignorant ourselves, we moderns—after the manner of benighted and satisfied people—largely imputed ignorance and mendacity to chroniclers. Dear old Herodotus was reviled as a storyteller (in a bad sense) or a dupe ; Manetho and Eratosthenes as wilful impostors ; Diodorus and Strabo as men to be heard with extreme caution. But the admission of the light has tended to reconcile these ancients with each other, and with contemporary history. Discrepancies enough there are still ; but instead of sneering at these, our pundits now indulge a hope that the difficulty has been only in ourselves, and that the keys of the enigmas are in the temples, or the pyramids, or the tombs, or graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever.


We all remember how, in the Eastern story, Ali Baba, after he had robbed the robbers, took to measuring his gold in a vessel—he had so much that he could not possibly count the coins, and so he took account of them by the bushel. Something in the same way, Egyptian histories, embarrassed by the

wealth of their lore, give us bushels or sheaves of kings, reckoning them by dynasties, not reigns. It is very well for Roman empires, French monarchies, and such ephemera, to note the names of consuls or kings : old Egypt tells off its Pharaohs as we buy hobnails—by the score. Thirty-one dynasties, say the authorities, make up the account of government from the beginning of history to the Macedonian subjugation. And now to raise some idea of what these dynasties were.

The most ancient fact popularly known concerning Egypt is, of course, the visit of the patriarch Abram. He found a Pharaoh on the throne, and this Pharaoh, as is said by some who have taken much trouble to investigate the matter, was King Acthoes of the 11th dynasty. The 11th dynasty, let it be noted ! and Acthoes was the 6th* of his dynasty. There had, therefore, been ten dynasties and five reigns of another dynasty (to say nothing of god-dynasties and hero-dynasties) before the day of Abram. Who and what were all these dynasties ? Well, some of the earliest—to wit, the gods and heroes who do not count in the thirty-one—were shadows, if not fables : shadows if, as some of the learned think, they represent Adam, Seth, Noah, and Noah's son and grandsons ; myths if their literal character of gods and demi-gods be not removed. And perhaps it may be thought, if proof of antiquity be the object, that

* Or 16th, according to some. The more moderate calculation is here taken.

Adam might serve the turn of the most ambitious. This, however, is by no means the case, for Adam—the Adam that we are descended from—was created only 4004 years before Christ, whereas Egypt claims to have had a king 18,000 years before their first historical king; and further, the priests told Herodotus that the first historical king reigned 11,366 years before Herodotus was in Egypt—that is, 11,800 years before Christ! This boast, however, their own chronicler, Manetho, does not undertake to make good. He is content with 3555 years before Christ as the time of the first-recorded Pharaoh, which takes Egypt back, at any rate, to a date anterior to the Flood; and we find that there are moderns who, with a sort of geological licence, by no means wish to limit the dates of Egypt to the Flood or the Creation. It is not here intended to say how these questions should be determined. Even if one of the god-kings be Noah himself, and another Phut his grandson, and another Mizraim, as some suppose, these, as Egyptian rulers, can hardly be called historical. And there is the less reason for dwelling on such speculations, that we do not get down very far in the lists before we come on a name that can be verified. Herodotus names a king Menes. Manetho's list has the same name at the head of the first dynasty—ten dynasties before Abram's friend. Now, a false list of names may have been given to Herodotus, and another false list may have been published by Manetho—nothing was easier: it was only to invent the names, and the



thing was done. But when men in the nineteenth century after Christ begin to learn how to read Egyptian inscriptions ; and when, on tablets and in tombs of undoubted antiquity, and of a date little posterior to the monarch, we find, fresh and uneffaced, his name and the names of his successors, and an account of his works ; when some of the works themselves, and the remains and traces of others, are yet to be seen on the surface of the earth ; and when the inscriptions and the works agree with the accounts of ancient writers,—then we begin to feel that we are on solid ground. And we have the above proofs, all the learned agree, in the case of Menes. There was such a king ; he was Egypt's proto-monarch ; and if we put aside all calculations that would disagree with Scriptural chronology, and accept the most modest antiquity for Menes, we must even then put him down as having lived 446 years before Abram. He is known not only to have lived, but to have undertaken vast engineering works, which means that he reigned over an advanced people.

Menes, then, is our starting-point ; but we must not jump down to Abram yet. Another important king or two have to be noted before we arrive at Abram's friend. Lord Byron wrote :—

“ What are the hopes of man ? Old Egypt's king
Cheops erected the first pyramid
And largest, thinking it was just the thing
To keep his memory whole and mummy hid ;
But somebody or other rummaging,
Burglariously broke his coffin's lid.

Let not a monument give you or me hopes,
Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops."

In truth it is highly probable that not one pinch of dust does remain of Cheops. As regards his mummy, therefore, the design has been a failure; not so, however, as regards his memory; for, even since Lord Byron wrote, this generation has made acquaintance with old Cheops, and (if we may parody Sir Lucius O'Trigger) though his dirty dust may have slipped through our fingers, his memory and his family pictures are as fresh as ever. The recognition came about on this wise. The pyramid *was* robbed, the sarcophagus broken, and nothing was demonstrable except that somebody had lain there. Nevertheless Cheops was a match for Time. They ransacked his tomb, and thought they had exhausted the secrets of the pyramid, but they had not. A cunning chamber was contrived in the mass of masonry, which was entered in the year 1837 or thereabouts, to which time, from the date of its construction long before Abram, it had never been seen by mortal eye, never trodden by mortal foot, we may confidently believe. Before this discovery no hieroglyphic had been found in the pyramid, and it was believed that the invention of hieroglyphics was posterior to the building of the pyramid. The discovery of the chamber showed how little we knew about the matter. Whether or not it was a crafty device of Cheops to keep his inscriptions locked away by themselves, certain it is that he *did* secure his inscriptions until an age when men knew


their value and could read them. And now we know that Cheops, otherwise Shufu, otherwise Suphis, did build the Great Pyramid. His name and titles are emblazoned therein, as are also the names of his kindred. Cheops was a king of the 4th dynasty.

Chephren, the brother of Cheops, built the second pyramid, in which his name is inscribed; and the third pyramid was said by Herodotus to have been built by Mycerinus or Mencherinus, the son and successor of Chephren. Manetho calls the same person Mencheres. The story of the building, and the existence of Mencheres himself, were set down as fables by the scoffers, and the world was cautioned against receiving the imposture. Colonel Vyse, however, thirty years ago, vindicated the credit of the historians, and confounded the sceptics, by finding the mummy and cerements of Mencheres, and the top of his coffin with his name thereon. So now the deposed and somewhat friable monarch, personally produced in court at the tender age of about 4000 years, with a label to prove his identity—the oldest inhabitant being unable to speak to the fact—is reinstated in all his rights and privileges. To speak seriously, the proofs of Mencheres having reigned and built the third pyramid, and been buried in it, are accepted by the learned as conclusive.

From Mencheres down to Abram's friend Acthoes we do not care to mention any name. Acthoes seems to have settled a long intestine strife which had been raging concerning the limbs of the god Osiris for some

generations ; and we know that he was most attentive to Abram and Sarai, and that he had a polished off-hand way of apologising for any little inadvertence.

Phiops, Apappus, or Aphophis, of the 14th dynasty, is understood to be the Pharaoh who reigned when Joseph was sold into Egypt. He reigned at Heliopolis, the scriptural On. He lived to receive Jacob and the patriarchs, and to establish them in Goshen, and died being eighty years old. His son Melaneres, and his immediate successors, continued the same benevolent policy towards the Israelites, who multiplied and thrived in Egypt until the 19th dynasty, wherein "there arose up a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph." This king, there is reason to believe, was no other than the great Rameses ; and some commentators go the length of saying that the great Rameses is no other than the great Sesostris. Let this identity be accepted, and we have the illustrious Sesostris the first cause of the plagues and the Red Sea catastrophe. He is not, however, our hard-hearted acquaintance of the Book of Exodus. Sesostris was a great builder of cities, monuments, and forts, as well as a great warrior. He was of a different stock from the monarchs who were friendly to Israel, and he made the children of Jacob toil in his quarries, form his bricks, drag his huge statues, excavate tombs, &c., instead of allowing them to thrive in the land of Goshen as heretofore. Thus were they disestablished and disendowed when Moses was born and ordered to be thrown into the Nile. His daugh-



ter, the tender-hearted Thuoris, it is suggested, was the preserver of Moses, and his mother by adoption, who bred him up in all the learning and wisdom of the Egyptians, with the intention of placing him on the throne of Egypt. For this compassionate princess had been, for political purposes, married to an infant husband,—a husband who was as young as Moses was when he lay in the bulrushes, and she did not hope to give birth to an heir. It may not have been her purpose at the time of the rescue to place Moses on the throne, because she had a brother then living ; but this brother died soon after his father Sesostrius, leaving a very young son, in whose minority Thuoris herself reigned, and it was during this reign of hers probably that she formed such a large destiny for Moses. This explains the amount of the sacrifice which Moses made when he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and preferred to suffer affliction with the people of God. When Moses slew the Egyptian, Thuoris was probably dead, and it was her husband Siphtha, now a middle-aged man, who sought to slay Moses. Siphtha, too, was dead before the day of the burning bush, by which time Sethos, the nephew of Thuoris, and during whose youth she had reigned, had succeeded to her throne, *vice* Moses, who declined the appointment. This Sethos is the man who could not be brought to see the importance of removing his Jewish disabilities, and who braved plagues and drowning rather than let Israel go. Besides his punishment while alive, he underwent that

greatest of Egyptian misfortunes—that he could not be made a mummy of, seeing that he lay dead in the Red Sea.*

For some time after the exodus the Scriptures say nothing about Egypt, until, in the First Book of Kings, we hear of Hadad, a young Edomite, who fled into Egypt, and married the sister of Tahpenes the queen. This must have been in the 21st dynasty. In the 22d we arrive at that Shishak to whom Jeroboam fled, and with whom he found shelter until after the death of Solomon. This Shishak was the first of the many foreign enemies who entered Jerusalem and pillaged the Temple.


It is now necessary to hurry on, or space will fail. Somewhere in the 24th Egyptian dynasty Rome was founded. About the same period the power of Egypt was declining, and she found it hard to keep off her Eastern enemies. Assyria now begins to be the great power, and to domineer over the neighbouring countries. In the 25th dynasty the Assyrians got a check from Tirhaka or Tehrak, and the evil day was postponed. Then Egypt and Greece fought side by side for a season, and the former took a part in wearing out the Jewish kingdom. Neco slew King Josiah, and carried Jehoiachaz prisoner to Egypt: but this same Neco quailed before Nebuchadnezzar, who afterwards, it is supposed, invaded Egypt. The glory was

* In this glance at the period from Jacob to Moses, Mr. Osborn's reconstruction of Egyptian history has been followed. There are other and dissimilar methods of mixing Egyptian with Jewish chronology.

now rapidly departing, and the 26th dynasty was brought to an end by the Persian invasion. The old country had now to endure a whole dynasty (the 27th) of Persian kings, kicking hard all the time, but unable to remove her bonds, until at last, about 400 years B.C., she reconquered her freedom, and was ruled by Egyptian kings through the 28th, 29th, and 30th dynasties. Then again she was reduced by the Persians, who furnished her 31st dynasty, and held their ground till the conquest by Alexander the Great, 332 B.C. Just before the Christian era, Egypt shared the fate of the other countries of the world and became a Roman province—the story of Cleopatra marking the period as a romantic point in history.

The language of this remarkable people is another curiosity. There is every reason to believe that the native Christian population read their Bibles and preserve their hymns and religious books in the same tongue which was used in the days of the Pharaohs. It has not been in common use since the twelfth century, but it would seem that there were persons who could speak it as late as the seventeenth century. This language has become a most important study, now that keys have been found for some of the hieroglyphics; for the country is absolutely covered with inscriptions, and most of these inscriptions contain information that we much desire to possess. Inscription, fortunately for the curious of this country, was a perfect mania with the old Egyptians. Not only did they inscribe great monuments, tombs, &c., but


they put their mark on everything that could carry it. There are, we firmly believe, the means of ample knowledge if we can but find the wit to interpret. But, be it remembered, it is not so much the language (which, as has been said, is still preserved in sacred books) as the characters in which it is written, which present the puzzle. One perplexity arises from the fact that there were two languages—one for ordinary uses, and the other known only to the priests. Besides which there were varieties of writing, used possibly according to fixed rules, but very confusing till the rules shall be found. Three varieties are recognised thus far. One would appear to be alphabetical writing, although done in pictures—that is to say, there is a sign for every letter, and, unfortunately, more than one sign for each. A second is simply pictorial writing, wherein a drawing of the object stands for it. The third is a symbolical writing, where pictures do not stand for the objects which they represent, but for some other objects signified by them figuratively or arbitrarily. In this last kind, the representation of some natural object—as a bird, a serpent, a hatchet—may represent a whole word, a syllable, or a letter. There are no stops. It has, however, come to light that very often, besides the characters which form the word, a drawing of the thing intended is given. The three kinds of writing are often intermixed in one inscription—wherefore, we know not—and thus a pretty complication was presented; indeed, it was no wonder that at one time



the hieroglyphics were looked upon as little more than quaint devices of little or no significance. Great genius, however, and great patience, having been exercised in respect of the writings, have at length solved some of the difficulties, and shown us how the rest may be solved. A stone was dug up at Rosetta in 1798, having on it an inscription three times graven, and each time in a different character. One of the characters was the Greek, which could be read ; and it being suspected that the other two were the Egyptian forms of the same words, the learned set to work, and before long had something like the beginning of an alphabet. It was not till 1822 that M. Champollion, the most successful discoverer, published his vocabulary, which gave at once a clue and a new impetus to the ingenious of all countries.

There are so many other heads under which it would be gratifying to write of ancient Egypt, that to have to turn away from them for want of space is grievous. Arts, sciences, religion, manners, monuments, dress, might all have furnished interesting periods. Possibly the pleasure of treating of these in a popular form may yet be in reserve, if the public mind continue to be occupied with Egypt. At present, it is imperative that we turn to those works of ancient Egypt which lead up to the achievement that has put modern Egypt on every man's tongue this day. Canals are not new things in Egypt. Menes constructed water-works on a magnificent scale. The draining of natural lakes and swamps, and the con-

struction of artificial lakes, the diversion of the courses of streams (branches of the Nile), enclosing of stone reservoirs, and so on, appear to have occupied all generations. The skill and labour-power being theirs, the application of them in this way was obvious, where terrestrial water was of such importance. It does not appear, however, to have occurred to any one before Sesostris to open up a water-communication with the Red Sea. He conceived such a design, and some say that he executed it ; but there is no certainty as to whether he did the latter or not. Traces of a canal connecting the Nile with the Red Sea have certainly been discovered ; and it is known that Pharaoh-Neco either re-formed that which Sesostris had before made, or was the author of the work. "It went off," says Mr Kenrick, "from the Nile in the neighbourhood of the modern town of Belbeis, supposed to represent the Bubastis Agria of the Greeks, and ran eastward through a natural valley, the Goshen of Jewish history, till it reached the Bitter Lakes, which derive their quality from the saline impregnations of the Desert. The influx of the waters of the Nile rendered them sweet, and they abounded in fish and aquatic birds. Issuing from these, it pursued a southerly course to Suez. Towards the western end its traces are very visible notwithstanding the deposit of the Nile, which has partly filled it up ; towards the east, where the influence of the Desert is more powerful, it has nearly disappeared." Neco did not, however, perfect his canal, though he expended myriads



of men in the excavation. Darius, who followed him on the work, effected the junction with the sea. Ptolemy II. completed the operation, and added a flood-gate. The work, after all, was abandoned, and became only a relic of past greatness and daring and skill. As an antiquity, the French explored its course during their occupation of Egypt at the beginning of the century.


Although to connect the Red Sea with the Nile was in a manner to connect it with the Mediterranean, the junction of the two seas does not seem to be what the Pharaohs had in view. They desired to make a port on the Red Sea available for shipping their own produce, and for trade between Egypt and the East, and something like a dockyard seems to have been established by them at Suez. What thought of barbarous Europe or her interests had great Egypt when she did this? what recked Europe whether Egypt did it or not?

Now let fall the curtain on old Egypt.

Raise the curtain again on the latter part of the nineteenth century after Christ, and what is the scene? The nations of the West grown to manhood, and civilised as no nations of the earth have ever before been, have penetrated to the ends of the world, and carried wealth and skill and energy into every zone. They have made the sea a highway, and ploughed it with keels borne down by mighty freights. The West and East, no longer strange one to another, advance each year in intercommunion and brother-

hood. Means of intercourse, facilities of transport, increase apace, but as yet there is a stern physical impediment—the way is long. Who shall minister to the impatience of modern minds? Who shall abridge the passage between the rising and the setting sun? Then stands forth Egypt—the Egypt that was Pharaoh's—waking from a long sleep, decayed and halting, but trembling with a reflux of life. She vaunts that she will bring two seas together, that she will make the path of Europe and Asia straight. But men doubt—doubt her ability, her resources, her knowledge—doubt her, stamped as she is with the achievements of fifty centuries. She may fail; but while we can look at the Pyramids, and the Sphinx, and the Labyrinth, it is impious to *predict* a failure.


Egypt came to the rescue, and we have the word of Egypt's Viceroy that the design of piercing the Isthmus was conceived by the native Government, and was not adopted on the motion of a foreigner. This, if we would judge impartially of the achievement, is a very important consideration; for we know how, from the very first, it has been imputed that European intrigue was the parent of the undertaking, and that political, not cosmopolitan, ends were to be served by it. If, then, the voluntary declaration of the Egyptian Prince can be relied on, it was with a view of regaining for his country an honourable place in the councils of the world, and of establishing her fame and his own, that he took the project under his protection, and resolved that the great idea should



unfold into a mighty work. Well would it have been for the work and for its promoters if this had been understood ten or twelve years ago!—well, perhaps, for all concerned, except M. F. de Lesseps. He is excepted, because, if there had been only smooth sailing—if there had been no imputation, no misrepresentation, no prophecy of failure, no scoffing—then the perseverance, energy, and confidence of M. de Lesseps could not possibly stand out as they now do. The opponents of the scheme have given opportunity to M. de Lesseps of proving himself to be one of the great. In a tableau toward which the regard of the whole world is directed, his is the principal figure. With the fame of a work which rivals the works of Sesostris and of Cheops, the name of M. de Lesseps is associated for all time.

They who have been watching the close of the affair for the last year or two may well be astonished when they look back and perceive how men refused to believe that which is now a patent fact—nay, how they did believe in and affirm results which have never come to pass. Our English commercial bodies, it is true, highly approved of the scheme when it was propounded to them. They were taken captive, partly by the splendour of the conception, partly by the prospect of expansion which opened to their own profession. They signified their approval and good wishes, but this meant neither belief nor effectual support. It meant that, waiving the question of the practicability of the design in an engineering,

a financial, or a political acceptance, they would be delighted to see accomplished the maritime canal which had been propounded to them by the lively portraiture of M. de Lesseps, or the forcible representations of Mr Lange. The living faith which is necessary to the excavation of long canals no less than to the removal of mountains, was not in them. They wished rather than hoped; and when they looked through the length and breadth of England, they found little to help their unbelief. The Prime Minister, a chief grown grey in worldly wisdom, to whom they were accustomed to look for a shrewd, penetrating, perspicacious opinion of public acts, took the lead in denouncing the scheme. The dismemberment of Turkey and seizure of Egypt by a rival power that should bar us from our empire in the East, were what he saw foreshadowed in M. de Lesseps' prospectus; in M. de Lesseps himself he saw a charlatan. He refused to believe that there was the least intention of making a canal; and boldly affirmed that, if attempted, the work would be frustrated by natural impediments, and the promoters ruined by the failure. Such was the tone of the head of the Government, who did not fail to sway his subalterns, or to send a general misgiving through the country. Referring to the tone of the press, we find many a journal that is now lauding the Canal in all its numbers, and preparing to electrify its readers with a description of the opening ceremonies, pointing the finger of scorn, dropping about such terms as "swindle," "bubble," and



otherwise damning with praise far beyond faintness. This encouraging notice would be kept up all the week, and, at the week's end, the weekly mentor which cannot err would decree that the thing was impossible and ruinous. Such dicta, inferior only to the words of fate, if inferior to them, would have stopped any ordinary man. Then it was set forth how M. de Lesseps was living deliciously—how he was madly flinging away the money of his dupes—how he was in league with the Viceroy to devote the Egyptians to a worse than negro slavery, and to death in the wilderness. "The Canal will be a stagnant ditch," said some. "It will be a wild unmanageable current," said others. "It will silt up with the deposit of the Nile." "It will be filled by the sand of the Desert." "The Bitter Lakes, through which it is to pass, will be filled up with salt." "The Mediterranean entrance cannot be kept open." These, and many more, were the cheering prophecies that M. de Lesseps was complimented with in English journals, which, after deciding that the Canal could not be made, were especially careful to affix to it the brand of commercial infamy by showing that it would not pay.

M. de Lesseps procured a concession from the Viceroy sanctioning the commencement of the works ; but this concession was not good without the Sultan's ratification, and great pressure was put upon the Sultan to induce him to withhold his approval. The difficulty was at length overcome through the perse-

verance and insistence of M. de Lesseps, who forthwith made a demonstration by commencing the works. The scorn with which this act was treated by some of our writers could hardly be exceeded. It was an impudent pretence, they said, got up to quiet the weak minds of his dupes—paltry, futile, and disingenuous. In spite of this, M. de Lesseps worked on.


Now, whether the Suez Canal will prove a triumph of engineering, whether it will ultimately be a paying speculation, and whether it may be made to operate injuriously to England, are questions which it is not intended here to decide. They must receive a solution shortly, and we may await it. But many of the accusations against M. de Lesseps and against his work have already been repelled. He has answered the taunt, that he never contemplated any real work, by actually completing a very great work: he has shown that an enormous amount of dredging may be kept continually in process. He has made no slave in the wilderness. M. de Lesseps is clearly no charlatan. If he should fail, it will be said of him as of Phaëthon, "*Magnis tamen excidit ausis.*"

It is time now to say something of what M. de Lesseps undertook to do; and, the better to understand this, it will be well to look at the map which accompanies this paper, and which is reduced in scale, by permission of the author, from a map which was appended to Mr Hawkshaw's, F.R.S., Report to the Egyptian Government in 1863, concerning the Canal.

[illegible]

The ultimate design was to pierce the Isthmus from the Bay of Pelusium to Suez by a ship-canal; but in order to do this, preliminary works were necessary. Suez had no fresh water save what was brought in tanks from Cairo; it therefore was required, for the existence of the workmen and for the prosecution of the works, that plenty of fresh water should be forthcoming. A fresh-water canal from the Nile to the ship-canal was in consequence designed and executed. It leaves the Nile near Cairo, and takes the course indicated by the line on the map to Lake Timseh. It is 26 feet wide and 4 feet deep. While it was in progress, water had to be brought to the workmen on the backs of camels; but when it was once complete, a supply along the line of the ship-canal was possible. Having thus got water, the next care was the construction of a depot, and this was established on the north shore of Lake Timseh. Ismailia is the name of it, derived from that of the Pacha Ismail. This town has now grown so large that it contains 5000 inhabitants.

In making the fresh-water canal, the Company foresaw that by this means much land heretofore desert might be brought into cultivation. They therefore procured the right of cultivating such land as they might render fertile. This right they afterwards sold back with the fresh-water canal to the Egyptian Government, who are bound to maintain the Canal works. The sale appears to have been much to the Company's advantage.



Nothing now barred the realisation of the project of the ship-canal, which was accordingly proceeded with. This canal takes the line (see map) from Port Saïd, a creation of the Company, in the Bay of Pelusium, by Lake Menzaleh, Lake Buleh, Lake Timseh, and the Bitter Lakes, to Suez. "In that part of the Isthmus of Suez," says Mr Hawkshaw, in his Report,* "extending from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, there is a remarkable valley or depression of the soil. Beginning at the upper end of the Red Sea, this depression passes from Suez round the north-eastern side of the mountain of Génэффэ, by El Ambak, Serapeum, Timsal, El Guisr, and Kantara to Port Saïd, and sinks in places below the surface of the Red Sea and of the Mediterranean." It was along this depression that the ship-canal was intended to run. Formerly a belief existed that the Red Sea level was higher by $30\frac{1}{2}$ feet than the level of the Mediterranean. A survey made at the end of the last century, by direction of the first Napoleon, seemed to confirm this belief. The belief was nevertheless proved to be an error, by the incontrovertible evidence of M. Bourdaloue, who, in 1846, executed a most careful survey, and ascertained that the levels of the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, if they differ at all, differ by only a few inches; that is to say, inappreciably as regards the Canal.

It was of course proper to execute the different

* Report of John Hawkshaw, F.R.S., to the Egyptian Government, 3d February 1863.

portions of this great work in such order that every part done should aid the completion of the remainder; and communication between the Bay of Pelusium and Lake Timseh being manifestly an auxiliary, the first instalment of the ship-canal was a channel of comparatively small dimensions, joining those points. This work appears to have been at first of about the same section as the fresh-water canal before mentioned, sufficient, nevertheless, for the passage of flat-bottomed boats of small draught of water. It was formed by dredging through Lake Menzaleh, and by digging and excavating over the ground between Lakes Menzaleh and Timseh. A portion of the jetty at Port Saïd was likewise executed, and another depot, with workshops, plant, and machinery, was there established. This work at Port Saïd, not more than seven years old, was the germ of a town which now contains 10,000 inhabitants. Not only has the town been built, but much of the site of it has been reclaimed from the sea in that interval. Beginning by drawing its provisions, water, and fuel from Damietta, a town far to the westward, the town of Port Saïd, as it and the works of the Canal advanced together, gradually threw off its dependence on Damietta, and a co-operative relationship between Ismaïlia and Port Saïd ripened. The fresh water is now pumped by a fifty-horse-power engine through pipes from the canal near Ismaïlia to Port Saïd, and of course to every intermediate station on the line of the maritime canal.

At this stage then, we have, 1st, The water of the Nile brought to Lake Timseh; 2d, Port Saïd and Ismaïlia established; 3d, A boat-canal, in working condition, from Port Saïd to Ismaïlia; 4th, Fresh water carried all along the line north of Timseh; 5th, A jetty, partly constructed, at Port Saïd. Lake Timseh was generally dry, or nearly so; and when its basin was connected with the Mediterranean, as recorded above, the waters of the sea rushed into the basin, and began to fill it. It was five months before the basin was full. Let it be noted that the levels of the fresh and salt canals are not the same, and that they are separated by two locks. It will be seen at once how stone, quarried anywhere along the line between Ismaïlia and Port Saïd, could be made available wherever wanted for the works. Stone from the shores of Timseh is in the jetty of Port Saïd.

The next undertaking was the extension of the fresh-water canal to Suez; and this was successfully carried out. Suez now, like Port Saïd, enjoyed its continuous supply of fresh water, and new and excellent stone-quarries at Génэффé became available for the whole works. The southern branch of the fresh-water canal runs, through part of its length, in the channel of the old canal of the Pharaohs. It need not be added, if the reader has kept his eye on the map, that as soon as the fresh-water canal was complete to Suez, there was water-communication for flat-bottomed boats from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. All

that was yet done was, however, but preliminary work. The formation of a harbour at either end, and of the great canal for ships, had now to be proceeded with, and the last five years have been spent in indefatigably pushing forward these operations.

The whole length of the Canal is about ninety miles. From Suez to the Bitter Lakes is above twelve miles; the passage through the Bitter Lakes is about twenty-four miles; eight miles from these to Lake Timseh; through Lake Timseh, three miles; on to Lake Buleh, eleven miles; eleven more to Lake Menzaleh; and through Lake Menzaleh, twenty miles. The established width is 328 feet; but, where difficult cuttings occur, the width is less. The sides slope to a width at bottom of 246 feet. The highest ground cut through is at El Guisr, where the excavation is 85 feet. At Serapeum there is a cutting of 62 feet. Nearer Suez there is a cutting of 56 feet. Through the lakes the channel was of course dredged. The depth of the Canal is 26 feet.

The last act recorded was the letting in of the waters of the Red Sea to the Bitter Lakes, which, it is presumed, are still filling, they having been almost dry till the Canal was made.*

Two jetties or moles stretch into the sea, one nearly 3000 yards long, the other 2000 yards, to form the harbour of Port Saïd. At 3000 yards from the coast-line a water-depth of 30 feet is found. The harbour-works have, of course, been very heavy and expensive.

* This was written in October 1869.

At Suez the Company are forming a mole of 900 yards long, under shelter of which the ship-channel to deep water has been formed by dredging.


Somewhere about £12,000,000 have been expended upon the work. The quantities of earth excavated and dredged out have seemed fabulous when put in figures. The machines used have been, to a great extent, invented for this work, and are of great power and ingenuity. The dredging and pumping has gone on night and day. A railway,* it should be added, has been made from Suez to Ismaïlia.

Such is the work as it stands. All who may see it will say that it is gigantic ; but they will only half appreciate the achievement if they view it independently of the force and constancy with which it has been pushed forward.

So far every difficulty has been overcome. It still remains to be proved whether access to, and depth in, the Canal can be maintained with reasonable labour, and whether, if it be maintained, the income will exceed the outlay. It is certain that the ancient canals of the Isthmus were for some reason or other abandoned, and that the result was the same on every occasion of their trials. But the conditions in the present day are widely different from what they have ever before been ; and there is every reason to expect that the skill which, so far, has overcome all difficulties, will not have been at fault in reckoning the ultimate value of the performance.

* Not shown on the map.

Before this paper can be in type, the initial sufficiency of the Suez Canal will have been tested by the passage of a fleet of steam-ships freighted with the great, the beautiful, the rich, the curious. Let Great Britain wish success with all her heart, casting aside dark forebodings and narrow jealousies. It has been her boast hitherto that she has made her greatness consist with the progress of mankind, not that it has been antagonistic thereto. New defences, new treaties, a new policy, will doubtless now be necessary; and should some knot worthy the remedy gather, we must cut it, as we have done before, with the sword. There is a parry for every thrust; therefore let us turn from the speck of shadow, and look towards the extended prospect of brightness. That which brings Europe near to India, brings also India near to Europe, and India is England's. We must do our duty by India, and make her a source of strength; then we, and not our rivals, will be the gainers by the piercing of the Isthmus.



CHAPTER II.

GETTING OUT OF THE SMOKE.

A LETTER TO BULLION BALES, ESQ. OF MANCHESTER,
FROM HIS FRIEND MR SCAMPER.


July 1870.

MY DEAR BALES,—My three telegrams—one only two days old—must have advised you that I am alive and moving. *How* I have lived and moved I now propose to tell you. *Imprimis*, with reference to those favourite similes of yours about a child bounding from the schoolroom, or a bird liberated from a cage, believe me, they do not apply to folk like you and me fleeing from our desks and ledgers. Manchester goes with us, hanging on like Sinbad's old man. One who has been long in populous city pent does not, if he has been pursuing a business therein, disengage himself from the populous city so easily as a poet may think. Prythee, then, Bales, give over your similes, for they prove to those who *have* travelled that you have *not*.

I was not unprepared for the feverish bustle of my last few days before starting. Where fresh work

comes pouring in up to the last minute, it is in vain that you seek those few quiet hours which are to be devoted to the plans and provisions of the journey; "*rusticus expectat dum defluit amnis*," the leisure never comes, and you go away distracted. You have forgotten a good many necessary things, and you are persuaded that you have forgotten a great many more, which afterwards turn out all right; you would many times on your way to the station stop the carriage and turn back if you had not run the time so fine; it is anything but a luxury that first half-hour's communing with your own spirit. And when, at last, comes the reflection that it is too late to remedy an omission in regard to personal wants, you don't subside into calm. There are a hundred business matters first intended to be done by yourself, then to be carefully committed to the doing of another, which, you think, have been neither done nor committed; and you study how the shortest possible form of words shall convey the necessary instructions in the telegrams which you will rush to despatch as soon as you are out of the train.

As you rummage your vocabulary to make these concise, a proverb keeps buzzing about your brain that brevity is the soul of something or other, but *telegraphy* is too long a word to fit in. What is the word? Hang the word! how the deuce shall I abridge this message to Bales without vitiating its import? How often do you say in your haste that a holiday is not worth having on these terms; that




but for shame you would turn back now, and bring your perplexity and your trip to a sudden end together! You can't do this, and by-and-by you find out that there is no remedy for your forgetfulness, except the telegrams which you have invented; and so that trouble is dismissed, but only to make way for another. You have arranged to do so many things in London and its suburbs! and the time allowed, which cannot be exceeded, will never suffice for all these, and you begin to enumerate them for your comfort. It all seemed simple enough when you were planning, but now it is clear that it never can be done. Thus does your mind, once set a-fretting, find the means of continuing its own disquiet.

Well, you get to London, and don't send off the pithy telegrams which took such a world of labour to frame; you find that seven-eighths of the things supposed to have been forgotten or unprovided for have been carefully looked to; and that, although you have no spare time in London, you do get through all your programme and are prepared to start at the appointed time. On making this departure from London for the coast, and not before that, you really begin to feel that you are leaving some of your cares behind.

What I have described above has always been my experience in getting away from business. But two or three days once past without the sight of new work make a different man of you, as I felt on turning out in a fresh morning to take the train for Dover. I


felt still better when I arrived on the pier and got a sight of the sea. Embarkation was no difficult matter, but it would have been much easier than it was if a broader stair had been provided at the pier ; for where there is a down current and an up current of mankind and two people can scarcely stand abreast, ascent and descent cannot be pleasant. It was a fine unsuspecting morning enough, nevertheless I found people making themselves up for a blow, or at any rate for a shipment of seas ; so, to be in the fashion, I adopted the prevailing uniform, which was a long tarpaulin dress fashioned with pieces of spun yarn for frogs and headed by a capacious hood, so that the passengers, whom I felt inclined to speak of as the brethren, resembled a convent afloat. After pacing the length of the deck once or twice I thought it prudent to sit down ; and accordingly I secured a place on a bench which held three, near the waist of the vessel, the two other occupants being an old gentleman and a lady. You know how, when you come among a crowd of strangers, there is always some group or some individual that more than all the rest attracts your notice, don't you ? Well, on board the steamer I was not long in singling out a gentleman as an object of interest. He did not robe himself as a monk, but it was not this singularity that caused me to observe him. He wore two wideawake hats at once, a black one over a brown one, yet neither was this the reason of my regarding him. I was fascinated by his peculiarly handsome face, and by the



gracious expression of it. He had something to say to almost everybody on board, certainly to all those who walked to and fro ; and at last he collected a crowd of passengers of all classes on the forward part of the deck and addressed them earnestly. I was too doubtful of my own behaviour on the high seas to rise and join his audience as I wished to do, but I found out afterwards that he had discovered a new interpretation of Scripture, and was anxious to caution all men that the common teaching is utterly erroneous, and that they can know nothing of real religion until they study his version. He was carrying with him to the Continent translations into many languages of one of the gospels ; but whether he travelled solely on a missionary errand, or improved the occasions created by other business by dropping divine knowledge on his path, I did not discover. I spoke to him before we left the ship, and learned that he was going to make a wonderfully long journey without a halt. His age may have been five-and-thirty years. But my first proceeding after settling myself in my seat was to establish relations with my immediate neighbour, whom I found to be an elderly and infirm gentleman going to the South for his health. The lady on his other side was taking care of him, he being a widower but lately bereaved. Had he not told me this I should never have discovered that he was a mourner : neither his garb nor manner betokened it. For many years he had resided abroad on his wife's account, she having been a great sufferer from

nervous disease. "Nervousness," I said to him, "is a sad complaint to witness ; but don't you think that, where there is a strong will, a good deal may be done towards subduing the symptoms?" "I do, sir—I do," replied the old gentleman with emphasis ; "but if you tell them that, they only say you're cruel and unfeeling." I imagine that he did tell his wife that very frequently, and that his remark was not well received ; perhaps it was not kindly made. I received from our converse the impression that they had differed a little on this head, and at the last had parted without much regret on either side.


Our voyage was rapid, and less rough than had been anticipated. Only one or two had been seriously ill during the three half-hours that we had been steaming ; and now our hearts beat joyfully at the thought of a trial well past, for there, just before us, was Calais pier. But our hearts were far too hasty, and were rudely counselled not to get frolicsome on speculation. A signal was made from the shore showing that it was dead low-water of spring tide, and that our boat, small as she was, could not float alongside the pier. A tug-boat came off and took the mails from us, and we were kept waiting about a mile from the shore to be knocked about for two hours and a half—a longer time than it took to get from Dover to where we lay,—until the tide should rise sufficiently for us to run in and land. The ship or the sea got into a great passion at this check, and began to pitch violently ; we passengers got slightly enraged too,



those of us who had the pluck to show fight against adverse fortune : a good many, alas ! who had crossed the mid-sea gallantly, now succumbed, and were cruelly exercised.

This misfortune occurs not more than three or four times a-year, and it was my supreme luck to hit one of those red-letter days. The harbour and pier arrangements are just not sufficient to meet known and regularly-recurring contingencies, and that they are not made sufficient is a just reproach on all concerned. It is likewise deserving of the brand of infamy that the Steam-Packet Company on these occasions take off only the mails in a smaller boat. They ought undoubtedly to provide also for landing passengers and their baggage. But as this was not done, there was nothing for it but to submit to fate and get over the time as best we might. Now, Bales, I have the pleasure of informing you that one of your pleasant predictions came to nought : my vagrancy was not even in this last tribulation punished by seasickness ; but I was one of those who stamped about the deck, and threatened law proceedings, and vowed they would write to the 'Times,' and who would have properly denounced the Company if the language had afforded expressions heavy enough for the purpose, and who finally were somewhat appeased at the steward's locker, and then dispersed themselves into little knots to commune about all things whatsoever and certain others. A group toward which I gravitated was listening to a gentleman with a clear voice,

a sharp eye, and the air and *sang froid* of an experienced traveller, who, after explaining how the delay on board would affect the journey of anybody going anywhither, at last showed how travellers proceeding by the Brindisi route would have to modify their plans. Apropos of which route he observed that there must be a great number of people working that way at present "to be fooled by that Egyptian delusion." I asked if he meant the Suez Canal; and he replied that he meant what some fond people were pleased to call the Suez Canal, but what he took leave to call the Ship-trap of the Egyptian Swindle Company (unlimited). You see he was in this respect a man after your own heart, Bales, thoroughly imbued with disbelief in the undertaking, and determined that it should not succeed. I ought to have known by sad experience how unprofitable is debate with a man whose eyes are firmly closed against facts and his heart steeled against conviction; yet, untaught by the perverseness of a friend of mine in Lancashire, I ventured a mild remark in reference to the passage of a heavy ship reported only a day or two before, and for my pains I got, "I only hope, my dear sir, that you are not a shareholder in that precious Company. As to ships going through, I shall be happy to bet you a hundred pounds that the first ship that may try it will fail to effect the passage, or that you, if you are about to hazard the experiment of going through in a steamer, will stick in the mud just as all the promoters of the bubble will be found to have done."



My favourable opinion of the work was not sufficiently strong—or sufficiently weak, which?—to lead me into opposition harangues and offers of bets ; but it remains, and I think will remain, unchanged.

The stoppage came to an end at last ; our steamer moved up to the pier, and we were speedily on shore. I don't know whether any examination was ever made of Bloody Mary's heart to ascertain whether or not the name of Calais was written thereon, as she said it would be. I don't know whether Calais was in later years a place that it would have been worth while for England to retain, but it is one the retention of which by England France was not likely to endure a moment longer than was unavoidable. My only wonder is that we kept it so long as we did. Just fancy our having possession of an entrance into France, using the same at our pleasure, and barring the French from the use of it.

This poor-looking old place, without harbour accommodation to suit the mail service at all times of the tide, has made its noise in the world, and its little mark in history too ; and we should never pass it without a thought for those heroic citizens who presented themselves ready trussed for Mr Calcraft's remote predecessor. Devotion which is to lead to a coronet or Westminster Abbey is not so uncommon ; but a cool walk to ignominious death, simply that others may escape the vengeance of an enraged conqueror, places a man on a sublime pinnacle of humanity, a level which hardly one in a millennium reaches.


It is good to ponder on such examples in these utilitarian days, when the Forum may gape till it is filled by navvies, Scaevola will roast his chestnuts on his neighbour's fingers, and the returning Ulysses finds

"Some friend who holds his wife and riches,
And that his Argus bites him by the breeches."

Delayed though we had been, I was not sorry to find on landing that there was yet a delay of a quarter of an hour, which occasion I improved by taking a meal, for it was now near three o'clock and we had breakfasted before seven. As the porter closed the railway carriage in which I was seated, the faintest whisper of a gratuity was wafted through the compartment. No man could say that it proceeded from the official whose lips moved not, neither did his gesture betray connection with the mysterious sound. It was the most delicate insinuation of the kind that I had ever heard, and in this instance it led to nothing except the conviction in the minds of those not previously informed that fees are forbidden.

Now the consequences of my landing so late extend for good or ill to you, Bales, and to all whom you may suffer to read these advices of mine; for assuredly it was in my mind to take note of the appearance of the country on my way into Belgium, and then to have written something of the city of Brussels, where I meant to sleep. But because it grew dark soon after our departure from Calais, I was,

"For the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works;"




and because my arrival at Brussels would be too late to go to bed, I took the advice of a German gentleman in the carriage, and determined to go through to Frankfort without halting. So all that I did in Brussels was to call at the Hotel de l'Europe on my drive between terminus and terminus, and to get your letter, which I knew to be in one of the bags from which we were so ruthlessly parted by the tug-steamer. The first-class carriages on this southern line are so comfortable that I scarcely regretted the loss of my bed, but talked till we both fell asleep with my German acquaintance, who had saved me all trouble about my ticket and baggage at the Brussels station, and who afterwards despatched me with equal kindness from Cologne, where our ways parted. His was not an exceptional bit of civility, but all the way I journeyed through and beyond their country, I found German travellers anxious to give advice and information, and most liberal in their personal attentions. Of this kindness they, I am sure, thought very little ; but it led me to reflect whether I had ever at home, without thinking it worth remembering, taken any trouble to assist strangers on journeys. I trust that I have ; and whether I have or not, I should like very much, if I return safely, to meet some German in difficulties on some of my frequent journeys about England.

When the morning broke I was four-fifths of the way between Cologne and Mayence. The carriage was full, the other passengers being all masculine and

all German. They woke up very early and immediately began to talk. I was much struck with the similarity of their tones and gestures to those of Englishmen ; as I heard their accents confused by the noise of the train, the whole party might have passed for my countrymen. And yet, except historically, we hear nothing about our relationship to these people. They whose consanguinity we do prate about have not the same witness from nature by a hundred degrees that they are of our kith and kin. To find our real cousins we must look in the land of cloudy philosophy and *sauer-kraut* ; there we may meet a people of like minds and feelings to our own.

The country through which we were travelling was flat and little marked, in so much that to English apprehension it might in the twilight have been thought a waste. With the stronger light all the marks of cultivation appeared ; it is only the want of fences and ditches that makes Britons think of a waste : we never see at home cultivated land that isn't hedged and ramparted and fosséd like an intrenched camp. "Take notice, all the world," says John Bull, "this is *my* bit of ground ; these are *my* boundaries and landmarks ; overstep them if you dare ! If you only look at my property, do it respectfully—mind it is *mine*." Foreigners appear to get on with less jealous precautions, and perhaps with fewer lawsuits. Might not John have more comfort in his fields if he showed more confidence toward his neighbour, and were less defiant toward mankind in



general? There is another question which perplexes me, and which you, my urban friend, will scarcely be able to answer. Whether wisely or unwisely, the country here *is* all open: why then do not the country gentlemen hunt foxes? But all these speculations are soon dissipated by the disappearance of the landscape which occasioned them. We are running along the bank of the Rhine and getting into the shadow of the everlasting hills. What a new set of sensations wake up at sight of them! "High mountains," said Lord Byron, "are a feeling,"—and so they are; the sight of them is like the influence of romance. Among the hills men will bear and forego, and give and believe, as they never do in plains and cities. Ha! a train of smoke; there is, then, a steamer before us breasting the unseen stream. We are gaining on her, for the cloud becomes darker and darker, and now we must be close; yes—see, there is her chimney! No, it is *a* chimney, but a brick chimney, not an iron one—so there was no great merit in overtaking it with a locomotive. And now we see that it rises over a large factory, the roofs of which are visible above the river's bank. I know exactly what you have just said to yourself on reading the foregoing sentence. "Oh yes, of course; foreigner going to undersell us,"—didn't you? My dear Bales, he is going to do nothing of the kind. Look at the thorough way in which we do what we take in hand compared with *his* way! Why, he thinks he has done a hard day's work when you think you have scarcely earned your

luncheon. Catch him scoffing delights and living laborious days, catch him consuming the midnight oil over his ledger as you do—hardly allowing himself time to eat or sleep! No, no, my friend; he may really be a wiser and a happier man than you, but he knows he hasn't a chance of underselling you, whatever advantage cheap labour may give him. And here note that among foreigners I have met with none except the Germans who can speak without malice of the *momentum* which belongs to an Englishman as such throughout Europe—who can see with equanimity how the John Bull impress is itself a letter of credit, and the Briton is allowed, as none other is, to threaten and command. "You are known as a nation," they are fond of saying now. "Everybody knows what an Englishman means. As for us, who has ever cared about the inhabitant of some little principality which could hardly be seen on the map? But we are a nation now, and we hope that ere long the name of a German may carry some weight with it." There can be no doubt that they are quite in earnest about this; but whether to do may be as easy as to will, has yet to be proved.

"Observe that castle on the island," said a fellow-traveller to me as we rolled along in full view of the river; "it was built as a refuge by a poor man who had fled up and down the earth before an agonising terror. Some say he was a monomaniac, but I don't know."

"What was his terror?" I inquired.



"A belief that he was pursued by mice. Early in life he forsook cities and populous places, retreating to mountains and deserts, fens and forests, in succession, but surely followed up and down the world by his tormentors. At last, being hunted to this neighbourhood, he saw the island in the Rhine, whereupon he felt a conviction that this should be his refuge, and the goal of all his wanderings ; so he built the castle, and lived and died in it."

"And once he believed he was safe, of course his trouble departed : did he grow rich and fat in his asylum ?"

"There was hardly time for it," said my companion ; "he was devoured by mice a fortnight after he took possession."

"Very likely," you remark, Bales ; "don't think there's any truth in the story ; and if there is, why on earth didn't the fellow buy innumerable mouse-traps, keep a pack of terriers, and encourage the domestic cat ?"

Manchester can't believe in the inevitable in physical things ; in stocks and shares and profits, which are metaphysical, and entirely removed out of the category of material entities, it acknowledges the power of fortune and of fate !

It was snowing fast when our train ran in to Mayence, and there was but cold comfort anywhere. During the half-hour of delay I got a sort of breakfast, standing at the counter of the refreshment-room in the keen draught of the doorway. After this I


walked myself warm on the platform, and then entered a different carriage to proceed to Frankfurt, which I reached in the course of the morning, and found it white with snow, the depth of which a pitiless storm was increasing every minute. I could not travel farther without some rest, and so drove to a hotel, where I ordered a fire, that I might wash and dress. While the stove was being lighted I sat in my wraps on a sofa shivering, for the apartment was remarkably cold ; perceiving which, the zealous domestic, to hasten my relief, upset the stove, which, with its fuel and pipes, strewed the floor, and took about an hour to re-establish. I did get warm at last, and then I got a remarkably poor dinner at the *table d'hôte*, which, however, was flanked by a rather large company, consisting of many Prussian officers, and French and Germans in plain clothes not a few. The only representatives besides myself of the British Islands were an elderly couple from somewhere near Bow Church, as I should judge, using great freedoms with the letter H, and recklessly saturating a sentence with negatives. The old gentleman had not been long enough divorced from his business to have got over the first expansion of freedom, and he conversed with much geniality and singularly incorrect phrases in English, French, and German, being entirely satisfied that he was mistaken for a person of distinction. The meal being over, and the day being nearly over too, I did nothing worthy of note at this resting-place ; but I got a sound night's rest in a tolerably

snug bed, with a wonderful cushion dancing upon me and vibrating like a lump of calves'-feet jelly every time I stirred. After an early breakfast I was off again for Munich, and in the carriage soon made acquaintance with another German gentleman, who kindly helped me through all my traveller's difficulties from thence to Verona. By his advice I do not halt at Munich, which we reach late in the evening, but go on, through a bitter cold night, another stage—the object of this haste being to secure a free passage of the Brenner, which it is feared that this severe snow-storm may obstruct, and also to effect the passage by daylight, which, as you will find, we did. One is not much inclined to be observant in stepping out of a railway carriage in the middle of the night, with ten or twelve degrees of frost ; nevertheless, if things had been much worse than they were, I could not have failed to be struck with the picturesque faces and dresses of the peasantry as they grouped about the gloomy savage waiting-rooms. The figures were notable enough in Bavaria, but much more so in the Tyrol. The number of peasant-travellers was accounted for by the circumstance that to-morrow would be All-Souls' Day, and they were passing loaded with wreaths and posies from their places of labour or sojourn, to revisit the earth which hid the remains of dear ones whose travels and whose toils were over.

Four o'clock on an awfully cold morning was not a pleasant time for arriving at Innsbruck ; but fatigue

will cause one to rejoice in even a cold inn and a bare chamber. It is a comfort to get one's clothes off, if it be only for an hour or two. I turned every minute of my time to account, and having made out three good hours of sleep, woke up quite refreshed and ready to scale the Alps if the snow had left us the chance. So, breakfasting and departing, we took our tickets for Trent soon after eight o'clock, hoping for considerable exaltation and depression before night. The road was reported open, which reassuring intelligence and the fresh clear air raised our spirits to a glorious pitch, and away we went merrily.

The ascent commences almost immediately after leaving Innsbruck: alps with white tops tower in front from the first, and very soon the train is drawn into the pass and enclosed by alps. That sensation of rolling up at a steep angle is not very pleasant till you get accustomed to it: you have an idea that the smooth surfaces, iron against iron, will not bite—the wheels of the engine may be turned forward, and yet the whole train be sliding backward; but you are soon convinced that you do ascend, and that, too, at a tolerably rapid rate, for the hills on either side are becoming higher, and they too are beginning to show white tops. Below the tops the snowfall has no more than powdered the scene; and the rocks, and villages, and the clumps of trees, principally pines, can be distinguished by their colours, though these are for the most part dull. The paths are generally snow-covered, but the streams



run along clear and sparkling, and are the liveliest objects that we see. The foreground of course gets whiter, and the air colder, as we ascend; and now we are so certainly hemmed among the mountains, that we see high peaks glistening behind us, and long ranges of pinnacles and ridges, when there is an opening to right or left. Of course the railway is a natural or artificial ledge on the mountain-side, following for the most part an inclined contour, and crossing a ravine or piercing the shoulder of a hill only when progress by the corkscrew process would have been impossible or intolerably tedious. The engineer has followed the advice given in one of Lord Lytton's novels by a cautious matron to a too ambitious youth, who nevertheless turned out a highwayman—he has proceeded by “insinivation, not bluster;” and ably has he performed his task, taking advantage of nature's unpromising accidents, and by patient turnings scratching out an even path through a region where, before his work, not a line or patch of even surface could be seen, and where all was disjointed and impracticable, as if the said nature had gone wild at this stage of her work, and revelled in points and edges, and precipices and chasms. Where, however, a ridge or spur did come in his way, the artist did not hesitate to tunnel it, and where it was manifestly necessary to go straight across a gulf he threw his bridge unflinchingly over; but his trump-cards, so to speak, were not produced but where they were wanted, *Nec Deus interfuit nisi dignus vindice*

nodus. His favourite method was in skirting the sides of hills and doubling round the heads of valleys like a hare. "Look at that chapel on your right," said my German friend to me; "in three or four minutes you will pass it again, as close to the back of it as you are now to the front." "Impossible!" I said; "the turn is as narrow as the loop of a lady's hair-pin, and here is a wen on the mountain's side pushing out between our course and the other edge of the chasm." As I spoke we rushed into a tunnel which pierced the offshoot hill, and in two minutes, as he had said, we had doubled the narrow curve and were pushing quite close to the chapel's back on our way to another tunnel which gaped for us above. A series of such twists and risings and borings constitutes the path by which you traverse the Brenner by rail. The meanderings and expedients of the way are infinitely attractive, and might well command your admiration in other circumstances. But it is not of the rail that you can think much. Above and around are the Alps, thrown and broken into all imaginable forms, towering one above another, sometimes perpendicularly, sometimes in a long view. The effect is very grand, but it is a grandeur such as I do not desire to share with any one. I would enjoy it alone: a remark is irritating: silence and solitude befit the scene. It is a landscape wherein figures are not wanted. Even the chamois-hunter, diminished to a speck, is better away. The solitary graves that are passed seem more in harmony




with the scene than breathing men, for the graves tell of the impotence and frail being of man in presence of the eternal and giant sublimities of nature. The low clear tinkle of the telegraph bell, sounded by a hand perhaps two hundred miles off, is the right and sufficient association with the living in a scene like this. It is a reassuring voice from the far-off world of men ; but man's immediate presence disturbs.

And yet this thought of man's utter abasement before nature rouses humanity to vindicate itself. If the individual man be but a clod of the valley, man in his generations can accomplish his mission and subdue the earth. Even here he has girt the mountains with an iron chain, and pierced their sides, and made their slopes subserve his purposes, riding upon them as it were upon a horse. Regard but his single effort, and nature's vastness reduces man's force to nothing ; but give time as man's auxiliary, and he will make a slave of matter !

The line is now quite white ; the foregrounds are white ; the firs only have shaken off the drift, and still maintain the sombre green patches. A little wayside chapel, too, here and there sends up a coloured tower, which, amid the waste of white, looks marvellously gay. Occasionally we run suddenly upon a small open area not quite snowed over, and sprinkled with birch or beech trees rejoicing yet in the remains of their autumn brown. But all is cold and grand ; and following the peaks up and up, the eye is not relieved, the snowy expanse is but more

affecting ; for that attenuated spirit of colour, that faintest suspicion of ten thousand hues that have dissolved almost before they have glanced upon the summit, serves only to make the whiteness appear exceeding white. If I shut my eyes for a little relief from the glare, I saw still the white expanse, with only a dark streak here and there. "Well," you say, "the picture, after all, is little more than one huge blank, varied in forms, and rising to an awful height—still you have depicted but a waste of snow." Have I ? Then, by heaven, I have shown the arch without its keystone, the body without the soul ! for above and behind the highest outlines is a sky of intensest blue, and from that sky the all-hallown sun, still in his autumn brightness, is glancing on peaks, and torrents, and clefts, and surfaces ; the reverse slopes and crags are in deep shadow, and the form of every hill is projected against the neighbouring hillside. Motion there is none, save when a solitary cloud, floating in the ether, changes the shades as it sails by.

Sometimes stretching away in a double line, with the straitest valley between ; sometimes beetling over our track in perpendicular altitude ; sometimes forming an amphitheatre on one or both sides of us, the mountains seem to rise higher as we rise. The summit eludes us : repeatedly, as our watches tell us that the crest must be near, we decide that that in front of us is the supreme peak, and then a few yards of travel reveal alp upon alp behind. Is there indeed a top ?



Our observation of the mountains did not discover when the height was won ; but while we were still gazing and noting the hour, and wondering whether this ascent could have an end, a change of motion was perceptible, the carriages ran almost on a level—or, as we fancied, went down-hill ; and although the Alps were still above us, wearing a bold face though overcome in truth, we knew that we were as far from the world's centre as we were likely to be that day. I have never been able to understand why, when we found ourselves upon an even keel, each of us drew a long breath. We hadn't been pulling the train to the ridge of the Alps, and therefore needed not to refresh our lungs ; and it couldn't be sympathy with the engine which *had* done the work, because that power which had been sighing and groaning considerably for the last three hours, had just taken to a rapid easy respiration. The wheels rattle along just as in ordinary travelling, and now our great desire is to look down upon the land whither we are going. We have done for the present with northern Europe ; we have passed the fountains of the streams which go to swell the rolling Danube, and from the ground that we have reached, just past the beam of the balance, melting snows and all heaven's water gather themselves together to traverse sunny plains and complete glorious landscapes, then to be absorbed in the blue Mediterranean. We are bound exactly the same way ; and it would be pleasant to look down as old Hannibal did upon that southern land, and feed the eye upon

its flowery champaigns. But no; the road still winds and winds, and the hills overlap in our front, shutting up the vision enviously. Ha! a triangle of blue! here, then, is something belonging to the nether world; the sea, surely, showing between the melting hills and a belt of clouds above. How lovely, how deeply blue! we soon shall see the shore, and then the woods and fields of Italy. Fool! the sea, the salt sea—the sea to which men go down in ships—the sea wherein leviathan rolls—is five thousand feet below you, and at least two hundred miles away; that in your front is another sea, and they that occupy their business therein are Orion and Pleiades, and suns and moons and systems rolling for ever in its depths—it is the azure firmament, the ocean of incomprehensible space!


But there is now undeniable evidence that we are descending, and the sharp cutting air which we have had all the morning is blown back, as it were, for moments by a softer wave. It is the first breath of the South charged with kindness and comfort, a pledge from the genial land winning its gentle way through contending currents and inclement blasts, and carrying hope to the mountain's top. Anon we get some glimpses of the lower levels, for we descend rapidly; the snows are about us still, but by degrees there creeps in a middle ground of colour. The sun's rays begin to be felt in the carriage; and very soon green valleys, with cattle feeding, refresh our eyes. The roads are at last distinguishable and

look grey ; the streams are limpid and seem almost warm. The little towers are no longer so remarkable, for colours quite as gay as theirs begin to pervade the landscape. Many of the roofs show colours instead of snow, and a warm atmosphere saturating an occasional clump of trees affords a pleasant change. Every twenty feet brings us into a new climate. The snow keeps away toward the highest tops, and, the sun being somewhat behind the hills, streaks of warm atmosphere, like the fingers of a hand, come feeling round the irregular cones. We own that this is Italy and rejoice. And as the scene changes, how changes emotion also ! It is no more solitary musing that one desires. There is a craving for sympathy, a desire to touch some one at every turn, every fresh beauty, and to call on a kindred spirit to admire in unison. Our lips are unlocked, and we are stirred into gesticulation by the light and warmth which dispose to companionship. Surely the wise man understood this when in the same sentence with—" Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away," he wrote also—" For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land ; the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell." To us coming from the North this is a sudden change to the prospect of summer ; the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine, bless the land that is before us ; and

more alluring a thousand times than these material things are the legends of thought and deed associated with this outspread lovely country.

“ Italia ! too—Italia ! looking on thee,
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won thee,
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages,
Who glorify thy consecrated pages.”

Minora canamus. You will hardly thank me for getting into this vein, Bales ; therefore, though greatly intoxicated by the mountain air and the pleasant places, I will avoid sentiment as much as may be. By way of a descent, then, let me remark that I began to feel rather warm, and threw off my greatcoat ; also that I felt very hungry, and looked out keenly for the station at which I was to dine. *That* is the proper thing to look out for, eh, Bales ! As to crossing the Alps, what of that ? Everybody does it, and a man of any proper feeling will make no fuss about it. In truth I begin to feel, my friend, that I have somewhat compromised my Anglo-Saxon dignity in writing as above. I would obliterate the twaddle if there was time. But do not, I beseech you, allow any one to speak evil of your friend on account of it. Conceal his weakness ; palliate his extravagances ; say that he bore himself on his journey in every way as becomes a Briton ; that he did the Brenner Pass as he once had the small-pox, and thought each a good thing got over ; that he dined afterwards in great state at the small auberge by the wayside, talking loudly all



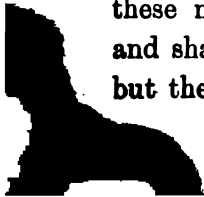
the time to another Briton at the opposite end of the room, and cursing everything by his gods; that he called for brandy, and then brake in pieces the miserable *petit verre* which the *garçon* brought, demanding a flagon and a mighty glass; that he scattered crowns where others dispensed centimes; and that he swaggared out of the saloon wrapped in his many-folded cloak, regardless of abominable foreigners and their wretched property, oversetting the tables of the fruit-vendors and the seats of them that sold *dolci*; and that he was ushered to his carriage with shouts of *Milor Anglais*, and *'Cellenza si*, with all the dignity of one English-born, great, uncompromising, and inscrutable.

Coming over the hills takes it out of you somehow. I assure you I was glad to arrive at Trent, and, after writing a letter or two, to get supper and go to bed. And shall I tell you what I thought about before I slept? By some caprice of my nature not about the Alps or Italy, not of the great Council nor of Trent—not of *this* Trent that is to say, but of another Trent now hundreds of miles off, and of Glendower and his conspirators parcelling out the realm of England, while evermore returned to my ear the jingle of—

“ I'll have the current in this place damm'd up,
And here the smug and silver Trent shall run
In a new channel, fair and evenly.”

And I saw the captious Percy chafing and quarrelling,
and smiting the point of his scabbard on the floor as

he stretched his finger toward the map. Possibly I was a little over-excited ; but this did not prevent my falling asleep in reasonable time, and having a sound refreshing night of it. In the morning I had just time to look at what is called the Citadel, a place scarcely defensible, but containing a barrack occupied by some Austrian troops. There was a general officer in the town ; and either he was there for the time making his inspection, or Trent is the headquarters of a military district. The glories of the town seem wholly to have passed away, and one wonders how it could have been that this place was selected for the meeting of a council. Perhaps you will condescend to read here what this council occupied itself with. I know you would not take the trouble to search in a book for the information. But as we know there is at this time present another council about to sit at Rome, it is just as well to understand that the subject discussed at Trent was not the infallibility of the Pope, but the ascertaining and declaring of the faith of the Church, the proposing of such reforms as the time might require, and the denouncing of Luther and his doctrine. It appears to have got over the ground very slowly, having sat for eighteen years, and under three Popes—which dilatory action, I suppose, is a radical quality in ecclesiastical councils. I am aware, my dear Bales, of the contempt with which you regard these matters, as they are unconnected with stocks and shares, and do not influence the price of cotton ; but then remember that the Council at Rome is sure



to be talked about in Manchester, and you may rather astonish some of our princes after dinner if you are at all informed. One of the brothers Pompus may possibly be aware of the fact that there was a Council of Trent, and attempt to silence the company by that knowledge; but if you, waiting your opportunity, show that you have some inkling of what the said Council did, you may extinguish him incontinently, and be stared at as a man possessed of much general information and sagacity. The practical consequences of such a reputation I need not dilate on.

I journeyed from Trent to Venice on the *festa* of All Souls; and our interest was of course much engrossed by the numbers of visitors to be seen in all the graveyards that we passed, and by the mourners that we took up or dropped at the many halting-places. What impressed me most was the willingness, nay, eagerness, to talk about the departed, which was generally manifested. Whether the grief was old and scarred over, or whether this was the first anniversary of souls since the mourned soul had taken its flight, it seemed a fashion, or perhaps I might say a passion, to talk about the dead, whether the discourse was calm and careless, as denoting that the loss was old and the wound healed, or whether an agony of tears during the telling betokened that this was the first renewal of grief. One poor woman entered our carriage at a time when it did not contain one other Italian to sympathise with her, and insisted upon confiding to us how, last summer, her daughter, aged


fourteen, had been taken from her, and upon detailing the particulars (some of them rather unnecessary) of the illness and death. Consumption it was to which she owed her great grief—and I believe that she was sorely afflicted ; so you see that our foggy climate has not quite a monopoly of this dread disease, which can on occasion snatch a victim from under the sky of Italy.

As you approach Verona you must be astonished by the great circle of fortifications which surrounds the city. Long before you can see a street or a church, you find that you are passing the advanced works constructed to make the place secure. Yet with all this display of preparation, I do not find that the fortress ever took an active part in great wars or stood a siege. It fell, nevertheless, as sometimes happens in modern warfare, not by direct attack, but in consequence of vigorous operations enacted in the open field. The battle of Marengo was well worth the skill and persistence which were required to win it. "What though the field be lost ? all is not lost," could hardly be said by the Austrians on this occasion, for all *was* lost. That battle, the fate of which was balanced on a knife-edge, and decided, so to speak, by the weight of a hair, destroyed not the army only, but the power of the empire ; and one of the provisions of the treaty of Luneville to which the battle led, was the dismantling of the fortifications of Verona. And this was not altogether a bad move for Austria. She mourned at the time over the humiliation and

her wrecked property ; but in effect she was rid of old-fashioned works which were not again required in those wars, and she has since had the opportunity of constructing, on a most favourable site, extensive defences according to the new German system. The fortress is something more than a place of shelter ; it is a screen behind which an army can be collected to issue at a happy moment into the open, and strike like a thunderbolt of war. So, in connection with other neighbouring fortresses, Verona is once more worth talking about ; and ten years ago, when the French were again invaders of the Austrian territory, these fortresses barred the way, and inclined the victor to make terms, as you know. But do you know, or do you recollect, Bullion, that this Verona helps to make up the Quadrilateral ?


At Verona I parted from my German friend, hoping that we might meet again in Egypt, whither we were both bound, and went on my solitary way to Venice. I had, with a self-restraint which you will approve, resisted when approaching Verona all foolish references to its *Two Gentlemen*. I could read plays at home, you know, when I had nothing else to amuse me, and so I needed not to be losing my time over Launce teaching his dog manners, and Madam Julia going about like Dr Mary Walker, here whither I had come to regard men and cities ; I was proof likewise against Montagues and Capulets. And so, with the help of my friend's conversation, and seeing that the plays are not my favourites, I had resisted the tempter

and he fled from me ; but this was but the beginning of trials. We were running to Padua, and Padua was but the way to Venice. I had no companion now to keep tiresome scraps from buzzing in my ear, but I did my best to amuse myself with the people in my carriage ; they, however, seemed, by their silent mood, to be in league with my infirmity, which at length achieved a temporary advantage. "Come you from Padua, from Bellario ?" was the ding-dong that went on, geeking and galling at me ; and when this grew to be quite intolerable I sought relief in following up the words, and soon came to a stand-still. Then, to recover the poetry, I ventured to think over one or two of the scenes, and was overcome. Jessica and Portia rose up in great force, and at last the irresistible Shylock came on, making a mere child of me. I confess that I took down my bag from the net, extracted the divine Williams, and had it out with the old rascal of a Hebrew from beginning to end. I would recommend my friends not to read this play here, and the same advice extends to the reading of the *Moor*, with whom I afterwards had some commerce at Venice. The effect is rather disillusionising. You have in your mind a very satisfactory Venice and Belmont and Padua to fit every turn of the plays, but the sight of the real Venice or Padua does not make them more distinct or vivid. Shakespeare was not a Venetian any more than he was a Greek or a Roman. He was an Anglo-Saxon, and so are you and I, Bales—think of that, my boy !



From Charing Cross to the Rialto, with only two nights in bed (for I don't count my three hours' sleep at Innsbruck a night's rest), was tolerably fleet travelling, especially for the winter-time. And when, after all this motion, I understood that I should probably remain in Venice four whole days, it looked like a protracted sojourn wherein so many and great changes might occur that it was impious to anticipate the end of it. So I unpacked my clothes, asked what palaces were for hire, inquired me out the most esteemed purveyor, clothier, hairdresser, notary, physician, undertaker, and so forth, and proceeded to arrange the routine of my daily life. All the leading facts had been sketched out very satisfactorily as I lounged in a *fauteuil* covered with crimson velvet, and I had just decided that, notwithstanding my philosophical practice of doing when in Rome as Romans do, I would remain a Protestant, when my plans were interrupted by the entrance of a young woman, with an extensive cap and dark eyelashes, who came to suggest that, if I was making but a short stay, it might be expedient to retain the services of a *blanchisseuse* that very evening, as the profession was much in request. The intrusion was irritating; and I bade the girl go her way for this time, and said that at a convenient season I would send for her, when an unpleasant impulse—the heritage from a former life spent in Manchester—caused me to number my days and apply my heart to wisdom. In ten minutes I had covered a piece of vellum with a catalogue of the pro-

perty ordained to purification. I should have done it in five in the French tongue, but I chose to hammer it out in Italian, or what I fancied such, and delivered both inventory and bundle to the damsel. It is one of the miseries of being from home alone that you have to meddle with buck-washing. Now the mention of buck-washing suggests the "rankest compound of villanous smells that ever offended nostril;" but, with all deference to the fat knight, I think there is a smell that beats a buck-basket; and that smell is to be met with on the canals of Venice. She may look a sea Cybele, with her tiara of proud towers; and "all gems in sparkling showers" may have been poured into her lap; but with all that she is a very dirty belle, got up merely for appearance, and with her feet, which are out of sight, standing in one of the foulest puddles of Christendom! I didn't mean to begin writing of Venice in this strain of disparagement; I didn't, indeed, Bales. I was going to give you first my delightful impressions of the Doges' city, and then, lest the praise should appear indiscriminate and unfaithful, to make an unwilling honest admission that she is not so cleanly in her person as could be desired, had not that unfortunate mention of buck-washing upset the whole scheme, and introduced the wrong end first. I ought to have begun by telling you how, on your first visit, though your preconception of the scenes may have been tolerably correct, the suddenness with which you enter on the fruition of your hopes is remarkable. The railway terminus




is the bank of the Grand Canal. Five minutes after the arrival of the train, you are, with your luggage, in a gondola, not because you are so impatient that you at once commence sight-seeing, but because it is the only means of getting conveyed to your hotel. Thus it was my luck to make acquaintance with the Bridge of the Rialto, the Place of St Mark, and the Bridge of Sighs, before I saw mine inn, to one side of which I was taken on a by-channel, where it looked so like a warehouse that I expected to have been hoisted with my baggage to the second floor by tackle. But herein did my imagination perpetrate a grievous wrong, for there was a water-gate and a flight of marble steps leading from the gondola thereto, and a state porter with a gold band on his cap, and a crowd of common porters at his back, who welcomed me with such deferential affection that I began to consider whether I might be a prodigal returned, and almost expected a bleat from the cow-house.

Now, Bales, I have no hesitation in saying that you, if ever you go to Venice, will be impressed by it in a manner which will make you despise yourself. "In Manchester," I fancy you saying, "men move, and things are moved, through dirty streets; in Venice they are all pushed or paddled along dirty canals: what the deuce is the great difference?" And yet you will feel that there is a difference. Then and there, my boy, the heart of stone is taken out of you, and there is given to you a heart of flesh; you float along admiring, overcome, not reckoning the time or

distance from point to point, but lounging deliciously on the yielding pillows, and desiring only that the vision may not pass away. This first effect is, I think, independent of associations, a direct influence. You do not reflect that it was Dandolo's Venice, or Desdemona's Venice, or Titian's Venice, or that it is now, through no merit of his, Victor Emmanuel's Venice. Afterwards rise up the scenes which have been enacted there, or the fables so cunningly devised that they bear the stamp of truth, increasing your delight a thousand-fold.

Oh that I had had a month instead of a few days to spend in that city of enjoyment! I saw a great deal, but saw too rapidly. Churches, pictures, palaces, sculptures, art-treasures! but often where one edifice would have afforded study and gratification for a week, running over it in an hour or two. The only thing of which I did not feel stinted was floating along the watery streets and looking at the glorious lines of sea-sprung palaces—magnificent, many-coloured, full of romance. My liveliest memory is of the ducal palace and the prisons. There is still to be seen the lion's mouth into which went the accusations that led to secret trial and secret death. There still are the dread chambers where councillors in masks heard evidence in their mysterious fashion, tried the accused, and decreed his fate. There are the secret passages communicating from the council-rooms, over the Bridge of Sighs, with the state dungeons. And oh what places those dungeons are! where the




prisoner lay in chains, without light or guidance, fed through a hole in the wall, his body and spirit broken in every way, while they importuned him to confess a crime which perhaps he never committed. Then, when the despairing wretch had made or feigned a confession, descended in the night the awful Three—dragged him forth into a vaulted passage, and there read his sentence, inexorable, not suffering the least delay ; for there in the shadow stood the ready executioner—there where the victim stood was already the apparatus of death—there in a second the floor was red with his blood, and he, or what was left of him, in a sorry chest, was thrust through the fatal window into the barge of the dead, which glided noiselessly to some coral depth where he and his fate were concealed for ever.

But these were only the horrors of the basement, of which we to-day know more than did the people in whose midst they were committed. Over the ditch and up above, very different scenes were common in the light of day. The great hall, where the Doge, in state, did honour to illustrious guests, received embassies, and transacted the grandest ceremonies—what a place it is!—of immense proportions, and its walls covered with paintings by the greatest masters, illustrative of the glories of the old state. Here, behind the ducal seat, is the largest painting in the world, extending the whole breadth of the hall. It is the work of Tintoretto, and measures eighty-four feet by thirty-

four, the subject being "The State of the Blessed in Paradise."

I say more of the size than of the details of the picture, because I think Paradise a wonderfully ill-chosen theme. All of us agree that the people are supremely happy there, but we do not agree as to what constitutes supreme happiness. Far less do we agree as to the material embodiment of a supremely happy community. If, as old Berkeley said, there be no matter except in our perceptions, then Paradise would require to be only a place wherein every one should perceive things to be exactly in harmony with his own likings. I tried, after I was in bed, to imagine the paradise that would suit me; but, after deciding that I must transport my earthly love thither as Tintoretto has done, and that there should be prevalence of benevolence, justice, and virtue, with only the smallest and most reasonable reservation in favour of cakes and ale, I found no end in wandering mazes lost. When I slept my dreams went on framing paradisiacal arrangements, and I thought it was revealed to me how there could not possibly be one invariable paradise to suit all mankind, but that a series of paradises was necessary in which men would be classed according to their tastes. Some of these paradises were very amusing, but I was anxious to see the place prepared for sound Manchester men, and was at last favoured with an intuition as to the state of the Manchester blessed. This community will be supremely happy, but its felicity will be




altogether dependent upon perception, as I had suspected when awake. Almost any scene will do, the beatified of this section not being very sensible of what are called on earth the pleasures of the imagination; nevertheless they have spiritual joys of their own on which the consummation of their bliss depends, and these consist in every man being firmly persuaded that he is in all respects getting advantage of his neighbour; while his neighbour is equally convinced that he gains the advantage of *him*, and thrives at his expense in mind, body, and estate. At certain revolutions every spirit has the pleasure of reading the names of those spirits who owe him nothing in the 'London Gazette,' of seeing executions in their houses, and themselves batten in the workhouse—all which ills he has predicted as just rewards of their pride and presumption. Everything that he goes in for profits him a thousand per cent. I was not half through with the succession of pleasures when I awoke.

Then you have the chambers and antechambers of the secret councils, the halls of the legislative body, and the courts where offences not political were tried. This last, I believe, was pretty fairly done. It must be in the council hall, though, that the most potent, grave, and reverend signiors are represented as looking into that little abduction case with which we in England are so familiar. Although the young lady smarted pretty severely afterwards for her infatuation, and is to this day a caution to disobedient children,

and to nigger-worshippers, the senators are exhibited as dealing out very even-handed justice. But it was not of these illustrious men or of their functions that I was intending to write on this page, but of their halls, which excel in beauty and glory all buildings that I have seen, all that I have imagined save one—and that one Pandemonium. I have not opportunity here of consulting the biographies of Milton so as to ascertain whether it has ever been supposed that this ducal palace suggested the picture of that which “rose like an exhalation” in the depths of hell. But I know that I had moved but a small way through the “fabric huge” before his lines rushed into my mind, they were so exactly realised by the magnificence before me:—

“ Where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave ; nor did there want
Cornice of frieze with bossy sculptures graven ;
The roof was fretted gold.”

I hope that I quote correctly, but I do not carry about a ‘Paradise Lost’ as I do a divine Williams. Howbeit, whether I cite the passage evilly or well, the place was Satan’s palace ; and by jingo, Bales ! the roof *was* fretted gold where it was not painted by a *Mæstro*—not gilt, you understand, but overlaid with solid gold, which looks to this day bright and rich as when the artist wrought it, though never since that day burnished. Barbaric pearls were not plentiful, but barbaric gold, which the unlucky Turk,



I fancy, contributed, was there in inconceivable opulence. Query, Did Napoleon's braves, when they were in Venice, know that these ceilings were the genuine article? I trow not, or the ceilings would not be there to excite my untutored admiration and make me write nonsense.


Outside the palace, in the piazza, we were shown the spot where those convicted of capital crimes that did not affect the Government were executed. These were brought out to die like men in the presence of their fellow-citizens; they were, I fancy, not unfairly tried, and the community had some satisfaction in regard to their offences and punishment. They were not confined in the same prison with the political suspected, but whether they were promptly brought to trial or not I have not ascertained. Anything done in daylight was better than that *habeas corpus* addressed to the muffled gondoliers outside the trap-door, which was the peculiar privilege of the State prisoners.

The King's palace, which is not far from the old ducal halls, has just been beautifully furnished. The luck of that monarch is such as does not occur in every age. Where a man has won power or territory for himself, the world is apt to turn from the scrutiny of his title, and in some sort to admit that his might constitutes a right. His glory gilds over the forcible appropriation. But here is the case of a King being richly rewarded with spoil for being soundly thrashed. Custozza and Lissa certainly did not give him a con-

queror's claim, and yet there he is owning this fair domain by right of the sword—the sword of his big brother!

Don't smile grimly if I tell you something, Bales. At Venice, the other day, I learned for the first time in my life how to look at a picture. I don't want to make war upon any of your sacred convictions. Of course a person possessing the power of vision can direct his regard to a picture as well as to anything else. As Addison said of viewing nature, "It is but to open the eye and the scene enters." For all that, it is not always given to man in his natural state to behold a picture to his greatest advantage. Now there is something for you to ruminate on, and quarrel with me on hereafter, when you bring your plain common-sense and common English to bear on a matter of every day's experience, and say of your poor friend with hopeless horror, "Doth he not speak parables?"

One morning our *valet de place* took us to examine the interior of La Fenice by daylight, and in the course of our wanderings we found ourselves on the stage, in a darkness visible, which discovered numerous sights of woe. There was the whole area a wreck as if it had stood a siege—trees, doors, windows, practicable bridges, pieces of interiors, pictures, waterfalls, and rocks lying about in admirable confusion, and looking fearfully coarse and ill-coloured. There were the carpenters nailing up and pulling down; and there were the scrubbers and those who




cleaned the globes of the lights. These among them had pretty well occupied or littered the boards, all but one spot, and there was the most woeful sight of all. On an area of some six feet by six was a dancing-girl taking her lesson. She was habited from the waist downward in ballet costume. Above her waist she had little clothing of any kind—indeed there was but one garment to be seen. A man with a fiddle was playing snatches of music, but both he and the girl were continually interrupted in their proceedings by a *mattre de danse*, who did not disguise the severity of his art by any silly suavity of manner. In truth he was a savage, ill-tempered brute; and his pupil, on a near view, was the reverse of prepossessing. She had fat ill-shaped limbs, a coarse skin, and a tallowy face, which, without its supplemental paint, was anything but a pleasant spectacle. Add to this that her exertions had brought her to a condition which probably led her to make the remark, *si suda molto*, although I must not say the same in English; and you will agree with me that, however fond one may be of the ballet, it is expedient to take it, like Mrs Gamp's beer, "rigler and drawed mild," but by no means to be present at the brewing.

My four days, Bales, which in prospect appeared so long, were lived out, as it seemed, in four hours; and just as I was beginning to know what a pleasant place Venice is, I was called upon to leave it. I was fearfully exercised by the summons, and made indiscreet promises, as raw men do at the end of a violent

flirtation, to rush thither again the first opportunity, and never, never, never, &c.—but my boat was at the water-gate, and my bark was on the sea, and I had to postpone the remainder of my vows until I should have settled my bill and embarked with my effects.

How fortunate are they to whom going to sea is a pleasure! In their migrations or wanderings, a voyage, long or short, is only an additional enjoyment; whereas to them who are not of “an hardie stomake,” the briefest sea-passage is a serious *per contra* in their excursions. “How often have I told the stupid fellow this!” you will say. Certainly, my dear Bales, you have said so, and so frequently that I can hardly at any time go to sea through inadvertence. I know what a man of my temperament encounters on the water; and yet, spite of my own experience, and your never-withheld advice, I was so encouraged by the fine sky and exhilarating amusement, that although I might have gone by rail to Brindisi and taken ship there, I, preferring companionship on board, and trusting implicitly in Fortune, determined to go by sea. Fortune was in her best of humours, and treated me as she does the brave. I steamed into Brindisi in high spirits, wondering how I could have conceived such an absurd prejudice against the sea—a presumption which, on a future day, may rise up retributively when I am moaning at full length, and staring into a Staffordshire pattern miserably.

All that I should have said to you about Brindisi is, that it is a place with which tourists are likely ere




long to become well acquainted, through the new lines of steamers which are to run from thence eastward—in view of which acquaintance hotel accommodation is being rapidly provided, had it not been for an incident which especially demands a record. I had been walking with a party through the streets to see the house where Virgil is reputed to have died, the terminus of the Appian Way, and so on, when at the corner of a cross street our attention was called to an object lying on the ground, first by a bystander, and then by a little crowd of priests and women who quickly collected. Surely some great curiosity, only to be seen here, and here but seldom! It was not an anthropophagus, it was not a man whose head did grow beneath his shoulders, it was not Vitellius his toothpick, it was not Domitian's patent revolving fly-gun; and yet it was an object whose exhibition, for the enlightenment of English travellers, caused my lungs to crow like chanticleer. It was a small sheet about as big as an ordinary hearth-rug, on which lay some vegetable product drying in the sun. An old lady first took up a piece and delivered a short lecture thereon, which, being expressed in a decidedly provincial dialect, would have been utterly lost on us had she not at its termination taken into her other hand the skirt of her dress and spread it out triumphantly, evidently intending to overwhelm us by the disclosure of some mysterious connection between the dress and the vegetable substance. We were not much astonished; whereupon a priest, thinking that

the old lady must have failed to expound the marvel, took up his parable, and, in language somewhat more intelligible to us, went again over the story, winding up with not only a reference to the old lady's dress, but a withdrawal of the sleeve of his cassock, that we might see the under sleeve fastened round his wrist. Still we were not sufficiently impressed, at which the crowd became somewhat excited, and opened in concert, all clamouring, and each one pushing into view some article of dress—a kerchief, a child's frock, a head-dress or other gear (one lady exhibited her leg for the stocking's sake), all to illustrate the uses of the marvellous substance under discussion. By the beard of the Prophet, it was a cotton-pod and nothing else with which these fond country-people sought to astonish the minds of us Britons, one of us being a Manchester man not ten days from home!

Bales, if there be one particle not utterly adamant in your composition, this will teach you humility; Ponder it, my friend, and as your nature urges, weep or smile. But what is to be done for the information of this benighted folk, who probably are not alone in their ignorance? Organise missions, endow evangelists, tell it out among the heathen that Manchester is queen. Gods! to think there should be people calling themselves civilised, lettered, and yet in their crassest simplicity believing that they have anything to tell us concerning cotton!!

And now, as I am going to take to the sea in earnest, I shall close this epistle and commit it to an





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A NEW SERIES OF BOOKS



Italian post-office. Not in the least fulfilling any of your croaking prophecies, but in higher spirits the farther I go, and panting with expectation of the pleasure before me, I depart for Egypt, hoping to see Athens and perhaps Constantinople on the way. The sky is blue, the winds are soft, there is just ripple enough upon the ocean to break the sunlight into countless gleams. A yellow coast-line with crags and castles marking the heights, and behind these the mighty Apennines rising in autumn grandeur with many colours, till they meet a purple mist that descends on them from heaven, are the characters of the shore that we are leaving ; but we shall sail through summer still to lands as beautiful though not the same, and make our holiday where nature smiles. And you, how is it with you, stern Bullion, this November ? I have visions of a figure in a dog-cart, girt about with waterproof, with weed alight and head down, driving cheerlessly through sleet and mist and smoke into an office in dirty Manchester, where by gas alone can one see at noon. If you find this pleasanter than the light of Eastern climes and starry skies, *chacun à son gout*, I don't quarrel with you ; but be merciful in your turn to a weakness for something brighter in your roving but loving friend

SCAMPER.

CHAPTER . III. .

THE OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL :

AS COMMUNICATED TO BULLION BALES, ESQ. OF MANCHESTER,
BY HIS FRIEND MR SCAMPER.


January 1870.

CAIRO, 25th November 1869.

MY DEAR BALES,—I take for certain that you are well informed of my doings up to the last embarkation ; and concerning the voyage which succeeded that event, I have only to say that it was of the rough-and-tumble species, the very worst passage of this my grand tour. But its disagreeables—and it was exceedingly disagreeable—never for an instant occupied my mind, from the hour of its conclusion to this present writing ; and I think, my friend, that when I relate the events which succeeded it, you too will lose all wish to hear about my sufferings, even though some of your awful predictions were verified thereby. It was on the morning of the 15th of November that our cruise ended. Soon after the dawn of that day I awoke from a troubled slumber ; and after being violently jerked through the arc of a semi-circle, to and fro, for some five minutes—she rolled

grievously, she didn't pitch—I chose, as the less of two evils, to stagger out of my berth, and to tumble (literally) into a salt-water bath, deriving much comfort therefrom. Then I went through my toilette in the fashion which you have heard me graphically describe when I have related my astonishing adventures in Manchester over a sea-coal fire for the amusement and edification of—shall I say it, Bales?—the unenterprising! Pass that expression, and learn that, when I reached the deck, it was positively affirmed that, although the land was too low to be yet visible, I might see, if I chose to look, the masts of ships in the harbour of Port Saïd. I did look, and saw the masts of some seven ships, and the funnels of some of them. But one funnel smokes, how then can the vessels be lying at anchor? “Oh yes, they are at anchor—the smoke is nothing.” But I see three of them smoking now; the ships are steaming along; and now, look to the right, there are three more; now to the left, there is another, and, farther off, a pair. Every minute reveals a new ship. They are going the same way as ourselves. We are converging on a common point, and that point is Port Saïd, invisible as yet. Breakfast-time came, but all refused to descend, looking pertinaciously for some material guarantee of the land's proximity. “There is a mast,” sang out somebody, “which does not taper, and has neither flag nor rope.” “Much you know about masts,” to him answered another salt of some ten days' experience. “You have probably got hold of

a tall funnel through a foul glass ; let me look." "You be hanged!" replies the first jolly tar, wounded to his nautical centre. "Bet you three to one it isn't a funnel or a common mast." "Done! the skipper shall settle it." The skipper has had his glass on the object for a couple of minutes. He has no doubt: it is the lighthouse. "Of course, of course —of course it's the lighthouse," we all say. How singular that such seasoned tars should have failed to recognise it! And, do you know, it really was the lighthouse, and we were told that we should be in harbour in three-quarters of an hour; and we went to breakfast, the roll (of the ship, not of breakfast) being now reduced to an arc of some eighty-five degrees. So, the meal being more comfortable than any for the last two days, a disposition is manifested to sit and talk and speculate. This, however, is soon dissipated by the sounds of artillery, and up we go with one consent. We were too far off as yet to discover the cause of the firing, or to distinguish in front anything but a sea of masts, and flags, and floating smoke. To the right we discern the long mole, which is the western boundary of the harbour, like some huge cyclopean structure, extending a little behind us to the Mediterranean, and to the front, farther than the eye can follow it. On the other side, and not far before us, is the extremity of the eastern arm. Five minutes more and we are fairly in the artificial basin, almost stunned by the continued cannonade. "What can it be about?"




“Oh! a salute to some great one, of course.” “Tremendous noise! what will be the size of the guns?” “Nine-pounders, I should think; or, I don’t know, they may be twenty-fours,” says one who ought to have known better. They were hundred-and-twenty-pounders, at the least, crashing away, regardless of everything save the effort to make a noise. We could see now what is making the guns roar so, if there were but wind to blow away the smoke. Despite the smoke, we soon get an idea of the cause. The furious ship is flying the Austrian eagle at the main; at the fore and the peak is the crescent. The Turkish flag-ship is saluting the Emperor of Austria, who arrived an hour before us.* Her yards are manned, and, as we get a little clearer view, we see that the yards of fifty ships are similarly occupied—rows of sailors at different heights in the air. And now it is not one ship of war, but several at a time, that essay to imitate Jove’s thunder—and an awful din they create. The clatter comes from all sides, and, as it seems to us, most wildly and irregularly. You no sooner change position to get a very little out of the way of the last tormentor, when—bang!—under your nose almost, runs out a treacherous piece, and sends a rocket through your brain, making you almost leap from the deck. Men, as they were interrupted in their speech or stunned by a discharge, deprecated the shots in a forcible manly manner; and some fair ones on board of us unconsciously moralised,

* The Crown Prince of Prussia had arrived before the Emperor.

like Hotspur's friend, concerning the digging of villainous saltpetre. In truth, there was a vast expenditure of cartridges.

We began to swing in order to take up our berth, and in so doing opened the broadside of the Emperor's yacht, alongside of which two of the Khedivé's barges were waiting. Presently a crowd of plumes gathered on deck, and we saw the Viceroy descend the side and pull away, cheered by all the men on all the yards. Later on the Emperor boarded the Khedivé, and the scene was repeated.

As we came up the harbour and remarked the sailors of different nations in succession spread out upon the yards, we had our jokes at the fellows' style, and anticipated the satisfaction with which we should soon behold something of a first-rate character; but another and another was passed—Russian, Swede, Dane, Belgian, Prussian, and what not—and still no appearance of the genuine article. The British fleet was outside, and two of the ships, they told us, the Royal Oak and Prince Consort, were aground. Not pleasant this. Our statesmen have, no doubt, excellent reasons for the attitude Great Britain has assumed in regard to the Canal; nevertheless I say it would have gladdened mine eyes to come upon the mariners of England in this great gathering. In the afternoon I saw a union-jack at the masthead of a tiny steamer, overshadowed by tall masts and oceans of bunting. This obscure manifestation denoted the presence of the British Admiral in his tender.



You are to bear in mind, as you read, that the firing never stops. It is sometimes continued by only one or two ships at a time, but it is the running accompaniment to the events of all this day. A Dane, quite close to us, and heavily armed, took especial pleasure in hearing himself talk, to our no small annoyance, for he lifted our steamer almost out of the water at every discharge. Noise and confusion are certainly a source of the sublime, though I do not remember that Burke has said so. If ears were confounded by the uproar, so were eyes by the infinite display of banners on ships and on shore. All along the moles that enclose the harbour, all along the shore, from the tops of all high buildings, from the masts and rigging of the ships, streams bunting, stamped with all colours and devices, and waved about by the softest of airs. The sea and sky are blue, the sun is bright, nature is aiding the endeavour of man to make this a holiday.

It took a long time to comprehend the scene on the water, which was in itself a complete pageant; but, having satisfied myself therewith, I landed with a party and began to explore the town, where everything was as lively and as brilliant as on the water. A large company was promenading the streets and wharves, but no special ceremony was enacted this day. Heat, sand, thirst—everybody in summer attire, umbrellas plentiful, men with puggarees and veils. We proceeded along the strand, facing which are buildings, most of them temporary, decked with

flags and prepared for illumination. On the other side is a row of banners hooked on to upright poles, and flying from little staves at right angles to the uprights. These latter are surmounted by gilded crescents, and would be more imposing if they looked less like stable-forks; but the profusion of gauzy banners streaming in the clear air has a fairy-like beauty. Seaward of the line of stable-forks are three gorgeous pavilions—the largest in the centre is rich with crimson and gold, and overshadowed by the flags and arms of all nations, grouped in divers colours, and seeming to denote universal brotherhood. Twice over I saw our striped acquaintance of the battle and the breeze mingling its folds affectionately with the flags of demonstrative foreigners, as if it were natural for a St George's and St Andrew's cross to hug and kiss in that outlandish fashion! Right and left of the centre were smaller pavilions—one crowned by a cross, the other by a crescent—both beautifully draped and ornamented: the object for which they were erected was explained later. We passed into the town, which, being irregular, and built without any architectural pretension, needs but slight description. Its rapid, almost magic growth, is its notable record.

To a person possessed with the supreme importance of the Canal, the most interesting sight in Port Saïd is the fountain of fresh water which fills a large circular basin in the Place de Lesseps, the great square. An Englishman must muse a little before he can under-



stand the blessing that this precious circumference is to the inhabitants. Even in the drought of 1868, great Manchester endured little more than the apprehension of being restricted in the use of fresh water. The supply may have been shut off for an hour or two in the twenty-four, and possibly the dust of the city was not laid with the same lavish flow as at other times ; but we never felt what it is to be straitened. But what must have been the condition of the living things in Port Saïd when their supply had to be conveyed to them by boat or camel from streams twenty or thirty miles distant? Think of their feelings when they saw spring up through the parched soil a bubbling jet from the Nile's flood, forced from Ismaïlia to them through tubes by the power of steam, and brought to Ismaïlia by the fresh-water canal! The power of man's mind, penetrating and compelling the powers of nature, achieved this. Can it escape the mind of the European who beholds the work, that he is standing but a short distance, comparatively, from the spot where a man's arm, animated by the power of God, smote the hard rock, and the waters flowed out? Surely science, heaping precept on precept, and line upon line, picking here a little and there a little, but surely if slowly advancing to grand results, is of kin to inspiration, whatever antagonism frail minds may imagine between them. It will be a great improvement when the population come to understand, not only the blessing of sufficient water, but how pure water ought to be treated. We shall not then see

filthy Arabs who come to draw and to fill their skins, plunging their feet into the basin, and standing and walking therein. If the practice be thought to improve the water for domestic uses, the sooner that superstition follows the many which are being day by day surrendered by the Arabs, the better.

There being a regiment encamped outside the town, I went to look at the camp. They were in bell-tents pitched on the sands, and rather closely, without any apparent order. In rear were a few dozen horses picketed, some wearing artillery harness of villanously dirty and dilapidated appearance, and some without saddle or cloth, exhibiting their lean carcasses and ungroomed coats. While I looked, an officer of rank, probably the colonel of the regiment, with sleeves covered with lace, appeared, and had his horse brought up, grandly caparisoned. He left the camp in great state. The soldiers, I observed, carried their packs much as ours do. The uniforms are gay, and generally blue.

Beyond the encampment, again, was an Arab village, where there was little to attract, but much squalor, and where the smells and sights were very disgusting. Returning, I looked into a mean building which served as a mosque. A few of the faithful, sprinkled over its area, were worshipping with their faces toward Mecca. The worship appeared to consist of prayer or praise with the arms extended, and prostrations with the forehead to the ground, alternately.

All the native women were veiled ; but, as far as I




saw at Port Said, the veils, which were black, covered only the lower part of the countenance below the eyes, being suspended from the head by a black band.

Finding not much more to see just now in the town, I turned back toward the landing-place, passing through the same motley crowd that I had before traversed. But an arrangement which certainly had been spoken of before, but in which no one seemed to believe, received just at this time a corroboration that was beyond all contradiction; for, looking through the open window of what appeared to be a restaurant, I perceived some of my fellow-voyagers refreshing and enjoying themselves with that air of ease and *abandon* which is so offensive to others who are hot and dusty and weary, and who nevertheless have come to no definite determination as to how they too will refresh and enjoy themselves. A friend, with a beaming countenance, and with pressing hospitality, held up a champagne-bottle to allure me to enter. He made me think of the modern Greek at Haidée's feast, who will occupy himself with no business, subscribe to no doctrine except that the capon on which he is engaged is fat, and that good wine ne'er washed down better fare. Jolly dog! thought I. Kind, liberal, open-hearted fellow! The jollity and hospitality, however, turned out to be of a character which makes them easy of demonstration. The whole entertainment was at the Viceroy's expense. The guests were *all* the strangers who had come to witness the inauguration of the *fêtes*. Here let me add that at Ismailia as

well as at Port Saïd public tables were provided for all visitors, and meals and wines supplied free of cost. Temporary buildings, containing comfortable, though not very private, sleeping accommodation, had also been provided; and, among the vast crowd that assembled there, there must have been many right glad to use the kindly shelter.

An hour or two of daylight still remained, and presented an opportunity for looking round the new harbour. I was surprised to find how loosely the blocks which composed the moles had been put together. They have been thrown in in most admirable disorder, abutting as they may; and as they are all regular six-sided figures, this mode of huddling them together leads to a very loose and honeycombed wall. I had heard before I left home that the masonry was without cement, but I had imagined that the blocks were laid accurately with their beds horizontal and sides and ends vertical, so as to form an even structure. And why they were not so built I do not now understand. The form of the blocks would indicate that there had been an intention of laying them regularly. No doubt there is a reason, and a strong one too, to account for a mode of construction which entails many manifest disadvantages: as, for instance, that the many interstices allow of the passage of much fine mud into the harbour; that the wall is not only weaker as a whole, but that many of the blocks have been broken through the irregular bearings and their efforts to find adequate support; and that the appear-




ance of this, a new work, is that of a ruin. The blocks are huge masses of concrete, weighing upwards of twenty tons each, and all compounded at Port Saïd. A short view of the moles convinces one of the justice of Mr Hawkshaw's prediction, that these walls will have to be built over again before the Canal attains a great age. The section gives 80 feet as the width at base, 20 feet as the width at top, and the average height 35 to 40 feet. The western mole is nearly 3000 yards long, the eastern about 2000.

The appearance of the strand on which the eastern mole abuts furnished testimony to the amount of force which has been expended. It was literally covered with boilers, capstans, crabs, cranes, shackles, bolts, trucks, and engineers' apparatus—such a display as I never before saw. Two obelisks of wood at present mark the entrance to the Canal. They are of considerable height, and when decked for a festival, as I saw them, looked imposing. Their slight structure, however, would imply that they are not intended to remain. I pulled a little way into the passage and landed on the banks to look at Lake Menzaleh. The descriptions which I had read had given me, I found, a just idea of the scene. The banks which have been thrown up separate the Canal from a sandy wash sometimes, and sometimes from sheets of deep water, or water that looks deep. Landward, that is southward, no firm land was to be seen. Only at Port Saïd and in its immediate neighbourhood, and along the banks of the Canal, did the dry land appear.

Returning now to my ship, I heard with gratification our National Anthem played on board the Viceroy's yacht. It was explained afterwards that this was done in compliment to some of our party who had been visiting there. Without at the time knowing or much caring for the cause, I was gratified to hear any recognition of England ; it was galling to see her of such small account. At night there was a most comprehensive reception on board the Khedivé's yacht. I did not attend it, because I did not feel attuned for gaiety ; but I afterwards heard it described as very crowded and very sumptuous, the refreshments including smoking. There was no restriction as to dress. The fitting and furnishing of the yacht are magnificent.


While I peacefully reposed on the deck in the light of the full moon and the warmth of the Egyptian climate, witnessing a sort of rehearsal of the grand illumination intended for to-morrow, I was better pleased to hear our neighbours on board the Danish man-of-war troll forth in strong concert a series of national airs, than I could then have been by any festive entertainment. All the day long had been working within me the consciousness that this was very Egypt, the realm of mystery and awe. By hearing sounds and seeing sights, and by constant motion, I had kept the sentiment down till dusk ; but now, when the night fell, came a crowd of thoughts and recollections demanding entertainment. Tlie down was not to sleep, though perchance to dream—to dream



awake. With desire had I desired to behold this world-renowned region, possessing supreme claims on the mind, mingling with the first tiny shreds of knowledge, and related to all the knowledge that the mind can receive. What visions had I seen of it in infancy! How had I figured to myself the hole in the sand where Moses hid the Egyptian whom he had slain! How had I conjured up the scene when the sons of Jacob, looking one upon another, confessed that they were verily guilty concerning their brother! How had I read and wondered over Belzoni's travels, and the glimpses there given of the grand antiquities locked up in the sand and the deposit of the Nile, and waiting for the search of the enterprising! And as I pondered on these things, there came up memories dormant for years and years—the form and furniture of a room, yea, the very pattern of a carpet showed themselves, and the echoes of voices long ago hushed in death, were heard once more distilling gentle lessons as when life was young, and I knew not how hard a world I had to face. It is impossible but that Egypt must command wider regards than any region on the earth. Countries there are, it is true, from whence have come arts, and philosophy, and the records of mighty thoughts and deeds, but these are objects of interest to only the educated. Egypt possesses the same attractions for the learned; and to this is added that every child which has been ever so slightly instructed in the lore of the religions of the civilised world, or which has

acquired the first smatterings of profane knowledge, cannot fail to have a place in its mind for venerable Egypt. Hers is a soil to be trodden with measured footstep and bated breath, as by men who walk over the ashes of their kind. Much as I yearned toward her, I believed that I never should look on her. My way of life, though checkered enough by accident and travel, has led me hitherto to parts of the earth where my affections were not. At last a wish is realised ; I note a bright spot in a wearying life. Weird country, House of bondage, Land of Egypt, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee !


To me, my friend, nothing that man has written seems so fit to stir emotion as some of the scriptural stories connected with this land from which I am writing. Often and often have I wept over them, and now that I am seared and worn, they can touch the springs of feeling as no other legends can. In Joseph making himself known to his brethren there is a terrible delight—a shaking of the nerves, a hardly endurable satisfaction, such as no poetry, or drama, or tale beside can arouse. And again, the swoon of Jacob, when they said to him, “Thy son Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt,”—what a transporting picture do we not form from it ! how one revives with him, and breathes again after the shock, and thinks it is as much one’s own utterance as the patriarch’s, “I will go down and see him before I die,” for the speaker



must be one with all who read his words! And sweetest, perhaps, of all are the words of aged Israel, spoken by him not as a prince of God, or as a prophet, but in simple thankfulness and unmeditated speech, "I did not think to see thy face, and, behold, God hath showed me thy seed;" epitomising the whole charmed story, calling up the coat of many colours soaked in blood, the cruel bereavement, the restoration of Joseph from death, whence his father received him in a figure—Joseph's splendid destiny, and the blessed reunion.

Well, it is past. I do not often indulge in reverie, Bales, so this lapse may be forgiven. The light is breaking through my cabin-window. Murmurs arise which grow to noises, and the noises to a din. The excited multitude is stirring again, impatient to press on the doings which are to precede the great trial of the Canal. I rouse myself, too. I can join as heartily as any here in the ceremonies and gaieties. I have wished for the success of M. de Lesseps' work, and I have never doubted that he would succeed. We shall see. The above is written as if I had expected to dress quietly, and then make my little programme for the day leisurely. I did expect something of the kind, but never was more deceived. Before my slippers were well on, a rattling, to which the rattling of yesterday seemed only mild and moderate, shook the sea and sky. Distant cheers are borne along on the wind. I guess what is the matter, wrestle myself into some garments spasmodically, seize my glass, and

rush on deck. All I can see is, that the men are out upon the yards as they were yesterday; all I can hear is the crashing discharges of all the cannon in the harbour as it seemed at once. The ships are berthed so close together, and so miscellaneous, that the noise and smoke must be as great as in a fleet-action. One inwardly prays that they will cease, if it be but for a moment, that one may speak to one's fellow, and ask or tell where the point of interest may be. There is an instant's lull at last, and cheers are heard, but still distant. The Empress is certainly coming, but where? Cheering again. Hah! the Viceroy enters his galley and puts off. Certes! he goes to meet Eugenie. More cheers, and nearer, yet where is she? What are those plaguy ships about, changing their berths? Is it some late steamer dropping in, or are they making way for L'Aigle? It is a ship I see, for there she comes, that dark thing there with bare masts and black funnel out of keeping with the pageant. No! not bare; there is something or other fluttering against the mast, but it is half-way down. There it goes up again. Why, what does it mean? Mean! why, it must be the dip of a flag returning a salute: there is, then, some great personage on board, that is certain. Look well at the flag which is now at the masthead and flying out—tricolor—bees—the Imperial standard—it is L'Aigle and no other. That's luck, for her course is right across our bows. If the Empress be on deck we shall see her; but no, she is not, for there




is a dense crowd amidships, and then there is an envious glass enclosure from which, no doubt, everything can be seen, but into which we see only through a glass darkly. Provoking, when the opportunity seemed so good ; but we shall have other chances. *Speriamo*. At any rate we will have a look at the outside passengers—the gay party under the canopy astern of the tantalising glass. There they are, not more than a dozen ; splendidly dressed, and keeping well apart to indulge us ; and that last figure, it seems as if one had seen it before. It draws near like a beautiful statue. Why—no—yes—impossible—but it is, though, and none other—the Imperial lady herself—majestic, beautiful, face to face with us at the distance of an arrow's flight ! That her husband is not by her side is a circumstance that lends interest to her appearance as slowly and swanlike she floats by ; while from the decks and riggings, and from the deepest hearts of men of all nations, come cheers after cheers, making the heavens ring. The shouts are first raised for the Empress ; but all seem immediately to forget that they are hailing aught save a being gifted with the highest qualities of womanhood—gracious, gentle, and fashioned like a sculptor's dream. She passes on—God save her !—and L'Aigle takes her berth opposite us, but unfortunately she does not lie transversely ; and, as she swings round, the firing is hushed for a while, and the air is pierced through and through from all points by the notes of “*Partant pour la Syrie*.” By the trident of Neptune

it has been a glorious pageant!—such a one as is seen, perhaps, but once or twice in the life of an ordinary mortal, but which men tax their skill to imitate in pictures, and theatres, and sculptures, and to paint in words for the amusement of their fellows. *I* have seen the reality here, and am transported by my good fortune.


There occurred now, what from the poverty of language I must call a lull, meaning by that that there was not much passing that required one to be continually straining the eye. Visits were going on between the great personages, and the French ships had now to return all the shots that had been fired during the morning. But they were the ships of one nation only, and could not maintain such a crashing as the ships of conspiring nations. Moreover, they were not very near us, and so I call it a lull; and the lull continued till afternoon, to the satisfaction, I should think, of everybody in the harbour.

Afternoon, however, brought its own *fête*, and there was everybody pushing for a sight again, *malgré* the rubs, and scrambles, and concussions they had already undergone. A ceremony was to be enacted on the shore, probably unlike any that has been witnessed on the earth. There was to be a religious inauguration of the Suez Canal, at which the crowned heads were all to assist. The novelty does not lie in this, but in the fact that of the crowned heads present two are Roman Catholics, one a Protestant, and the fourth a Mohammedan. The Cross and Crescent are both to overshadow worshippers who will prefer to heaven a



common prayer for the success of the work which has been accomplished, repudiating selfish policies, and pleading that their aim is peace, goodwill towards men. The pavilions which I had seen in my walk of yesterday are to be the scene of the rite ; and thither will crowd great and small before three o'clock. I landed in due time in company with two friends, a gentleman from the north of England and his young fair daughter. We pass from the landing-place along causeways and under arches, till we are on the line of the expected procession, which is marked out by a flooring of loose planks over the sand. The notabilia of the road as distinguished from yesterday are, that the crowd is hurrying all one way, and that the sides of the route are flanked by troops in line. We got a position which seemed promising, and took some little pains to establish ourselves therein. This we effected, and as I found my elbows were against the sides of two English baronets, I imagined that we had not chosen badly. There was some little objection on the part of the military to our standing where we did, but when they looked at the lady who belonged to our party, the gallant Mussulmans withdrew all opposition. There were two or three commands to stand back, which raised the hope that the procession was at hand, but these ended in nothing except murmurs. At last, after another command to stand close, there was manifestly a number of persons coming soberly along the boarded walk, like the head of a procession, with uniforms, and robes, and gay streamers. It was

composed of different officials, military and civil, of many nations. Our Consul-General and our Admiral were among them. These passed onward and took their stations on the central platform. I was sorry to observe, just after they passed, that a naval officer (French, I think) stumbled and fell: it was not clear whether from illness or from catching his foot. There was an interval, and then another batch of processionists—notabilities this time, though; for among them was the enviable De Lesseps himself, leading his charming *fiancée*. A proud man he must have been, and ought to have been, that day. And near him was Madame de Lesseps, his daughter-in-law, on the arm of what appeared to be a general officer, but turned out to be a literary gentleman of reputation, jammed into a red coat rich with decorations, and plumed like Mars—a sublime sight, or within a step of it! It has occurred to me that Mrs B. might not object to learn how the lady who is so soon to be Madame de Lesseps was habited on this great occasion; and, according to my ability, I proceed to describe her dress. She wore a short black silk dress, and a black hat, with *two* veils—the one next her face a grey gauze, outside that a spotted black. The group was tolerably large, but I had not time to observe all its members; and so these passed on to the platform. And now at last the troops present arms, there are tall banners waving in the distance, and the sounds of military music—the sceptred guests this time, no doubt. They come on, preceded by some of the Khedivé's household—a



cluster of great ones such as may not often be seen together. The Empress of the French, the Emperor of Austria, the Viceroy of Egypt, the Crown Prince of Prussia, and the Viceroy's young son. They are walking slowly, on a level with the crowd, and within distinct view of all beholders. The Empress leans on the arm of the Emperor of Austria. The cheers are hearty as they come along. She draws near. The Empress, the cynosure, smiling as only some ten women in the world can smile, winning hearts, applauded, worshipped; but she passed, and it was as if the sun had been eclipsed. A right worthy party they appeared, and I believe the salutations which met them this day were as genuine as they were numerous and loud. The suites of the different princes made up the procession, which had soon filed on to the centre platform. During the short interval before the commencement of the services, the naval officer whom I had seen fall was led away between two comrades, looking very weak and wan. I am afraid that he was struck by some disease, but I never heard more of him. A parenthesis here for Mrs B., whom I had forgotten in writing the above. The Empress wore a short pale-grey silk, with deep white Brussels lace arranged *en paniers* and flounces, as my fair companion explained to me. Her hat and veil were black, and there was a black velvet ribbon round her neck.

The Mohammedan pontiff who officiated on this occasion was understood to be a man of surpass-

ing sanctity, who had come from a great distance. He was old, and his voice feeble, so that his utterances were not very distinctly heard,—a circumstance which, to the European part of the audience, could not have been of much importance, as he, of course, spoke in Arabic. Whether it may have been a prayer or an exhortation which he gave voice to, it was but short. And then followed prayers on the Roman Catholic side of the platform. But the event of the meeting was yet to come—namely, an address by M. Bauer, her Majesty's confessor, commencing, "*Monseigneur, Madame, Sire*,"—Monseigneur indicating, as I understood, the Viceroy. It is hardly a disparagement to say that this oration contained no new information or idea. It was impossible that a subject which had been so long and so generally discussed could be put into an entirely new light for this public day. But it is, I think, a fair objection to the speech that, being of necessity composed of somewhat trite matter, it was couched in grandiloquent phrases. Familiar ideas do not admit of being dressed in high-sounding words. I shall be curious to see whether, when the discourse is published in the papers, as it will be, the judgment which I have formed of it will be supported by the critics. The orator magnified the work now achieved as one of the grandest which history can record, and dilated on the benefits derivable from it both to the present and the future. He thought that the day of creation and the 16th day of November 1869 would both figure in the chronology



of the future in ineffaceable characters. Then he proceeded : " Il y a deux mondes unis dans un seul. Le splendide orient et l'occident merveilleux se rapprochent, se saluent : salut ! splendide orient d'où nous viennent à la fois la lumière du soleil et celle de l'intelligence. Et toi aussi salut ! occident qui as recueilli cette lumière et en as fait le patrimoine commun de tous. C'est aujourd'hui la grande fête de l'humanité tout entière ! " The Canal, which seems only a means of increasing wealth, is nevertheless to be the great river which of two worlds shall make a single world, and of all the races of the earth a single humanity. Manners, language, customs, are all to be assimilated. " Il n'y aura plus qu'un unique fairceau, l'humanité. " These are very fine words, and very grand promises, but are they not rather lavish ? Our friend over the water will not be long before he endeavours to emulate this work, or rather to overwhelm and stamp it out of notice, by the splendid piercing of the Isthmus of Darien. But what will be the use of opening the second isthmus if the opening of the first has already fused the nations into " une seule humanité, " and produced a millenium ? Fortunately the gentlemen who are expected to promote the junction of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans are not of a race likely to be outdone in tall talk ; and as they once discovered an oyster so big that it required two men to swallow it whole, so they may represent *l'humanité* as grown to such perfection that it requires two canals to maintain it *seule*.

M. Bauer, with better taste than distinguishes the greater part of his address, complimented the Viceroy on the success of the undertaking. "Ce que vous avez sagement voulu," he said, "vous avez courageusement accompli. Jouissez aujourd'hui de votre glorieux succès!" but he immediately after relapsed into bombast. I cannot, however, find much fault with the few words which he addressed particularly to the Empress Eugenie. "Madame, et ce n'est pas en une parole banale l'histoire dira tout ce que cette œuvre merveilleuse doit à vos chaudes sympathies. Ici encore, votre cœur a battu à l'unison de celui de la France!" Neither do I wish one word omitted from the apostrophe which he made to the great author of the work, and I joined heartily in the cheer which attended the conclusion of it: "Tout ce qui constitue le puissant initiateur, en est fait la plus grande gloire du dix-neuvième siècle. Ainsi il est un nom que nous pouvons sans désavantage opposer à celui de Christophe Colomb, c'est celui de FERDINAND DE LESSEPS." (Bravo! bravo!)


In awarding to the Emperor of Austria his share of the compliments, M. Bauer said that the Adriatic Sea made now only one river with the Indian Ocean. The meaning of this flourish is not quite clear, but the expression struck me and many of my friends with whom I have talked the matter over as being in questionable taste. An appeal to Heaven, quite worthy to be inscribed with the rest of the oration, ended it.

After the ceremony the illustrious actors in it returned in the same order in which they had come to the wharf, and thence on board their respective ships under the indispensable salutes of cannon. I strolled about Port Saïd, looking into some of the shops, which seemed very fairly supplied. There was no public entertainment this night, if that expression be applicable when so many thousands were being entertained at the Viceroy's expense, and when an illumination was being prepared which should delight all eyes ashore or afloat. I mean that invitations for a dinner, ball, or other party were not issued by the Viceroy, and it was understood that sovereigns and princes would spend the evening as each should please, and prepare for the passage of the Canal to-morrow.

The early part of the evening was passed on board in discussing once more the probabilities of the passage to-morrow, and the arrangements made in that respect. Sinister rumours were afloat concerning the grounding of a Turkish steamer in the Canal, on which the prophets of evil began to croak hoarsely. I own that I was surprised to find how little faith there was even now in the sufficiency of the work. As the Israelites imputed to Moses that he had brought them out of Egypt to perish in the wilderness, so did they of little faith affirm that M. de Lesseps had decoyed us all from our hearths and altars to witness a miserable failure. We should see. We might go into the Canal, but our ship would have

to be dug out of it, and we, landed in the wilderness, might find our way to the coast as best we could. The ladies, bless them! showed less distrust than the gentlemen, and argued against the probability of a work which, through so many difficulties and dangers, had been brought triumphantly to this point, being allowed to come to nought at this supreme moment. And so, in cheerful predictions and dining, we whiled away the hours till the illuminations should commence.

If M. de Lesseps was to lie open to our reproach for seducing us from our homes to be disappointed in respect of the Canal, he at any rate deserved credit for bringing us to a better climate than our own. I could imagine what an English evening would be like on the 16th of November—very unlike the heavenly night-fall in which we took to our boats to behold the illuminations and fireworks. The temperature was simply delicious; hardly a ripple was on the water, and the moon, at the full, was riding in the heavens. We pulled out into the small open passage left after accommodating so many ships, and looked down the rows of shipping to right and left. All were ablaze with lamps, some variegated, others of uniform colour. In some of them every inch of the rigging was studded with these gay fires, and in all there was a profuse display. Near to you the glare quite dazzled, but the lights mellowed with distance: three or four ships off they were in lines and streaks; farther on they exhibited confused figures; and at last they stretched




away into what seemed infinity—an endless rosy cloud. One ship of war, which had the appearance of lying across the harbour, came out especially strong in illumination; and the Viceroy's yacht was most tastefully and profusely lighted, rigging and hull too. To form an idea of all this, you must consider the large area over which the fires extended. Look which way you might, your eye could not find a sombre spot; the heavens seemed on fire, and the calm depths on which we floated, reflecting all the glories, multiplied indefinitely the brilliant figures. Before we could take in the whole effects, rockets began to rise from different quarters at once, and these continued to be discharged during the whole evening, the stars of some of them being most artistically and beautifully contrived. Besides these, there were all sorts of fiery projectiles, which, little by little, joined in the general conflagration; and at last, on the strand, were exhibited all manner of *feux d'artifice*, the most elaborate appearing near to one of the obelisks which I mentioned as marking the entrance to the Canal. Along this strand burned coloured lamps. It was, indeed, a fairy scene, and to pull about the harbour and enjoy it seemed the height of pleasure. Our wayward nature, however, will have change; and, leaving the delights on the water, we pulled to shore to see how it fared with the town. There, too, all was light. Torches glared, names and sentences spelt with stars were visible, Chinese lanterns gleamed high and low, and of all colours. It

was like taking a walk through the zodiac. I never saw such a glitter of artificial light as on this night. The murmuring of many voices, and the shooting of the projectiles, were the only sounds that broke the stillness—a delightful contrast to the banging and rattling that had been going on all day. I do not know what Port Saïd may be in its working clothes, but in its holiday dress I bear testimony to its being a most enchanting place.

The arrangements for commencing the passage of the Canal next day were not announced till late on the 16th, and some inconvenience ensued, so that the order of proceeding was not strictly observed. There was intelligence of the ship that had grounded in the Canal being off the bank ; but still the doubters were dissatisfied, and went to bed with doleful hearts. It was a comfort to learn this evening that the two English ships had been got off the mud outside.

The morning of the 17th began with firing, like the preceding two days. As I knew what the firing meant, I did not suffer myself to be startled out of my cabin, as I had done the day before, but dressed leisurely, judging from the sounds without what was going on. The ships of war had been directed to enter first, and there were to be intervals of a quarter of an hour each between every two ships. When, therefore, after the first cannonading I heard our Danish neighbour playing "*Partant pour la Syrie*," I knew that *L'Aigle* was entering the Canal. More firing, and the Hymn to the Emperor, showed that




the Austrian imperial yacht had gone in,—and so on. Our national anthem was being played as I came out to view the scene, and Sir A. Milne, in his tender, was just passing between the obelisks. After seeing the first few begin the passage, and watching their masts as long as we could see them, we went to breakfast. The news at table was that, by incredible exertions continued all night, the obstructing ship had been removed ; but still heads were shaken and predictions hazarded against a successful passage. For my part, I was not in the least surprised to hear that a ship had touched in the Canal, or that they had got her off. The smallest error in steering must put a long ship on the bank ; but the officers of the Canal were no doubt prepared for accidents of the kind, and no doubt they took care that everything should be clear on this eventful morning. I was so far from thinking worse of the Canal because a ship had taken the ground, that I rather rejoiced in the accident, as it gave an opportunity of showing how readily it could be dealt with.

It was afternoon before we in our turn steamed into the jaws of the Canal. We were about in the middle of the procession, so that it must have been evening before the last ship entered. The orders were to proceed at the rate of five miles an hour, and to maintain the initial distance between the ships. Of course the transmission of instructions from either end of the flotilla to the other by signals was easy. It was delightful to reflect that we were actually in

the much-canvassed water, and then to feel that our ship, which did not then draw much over twelve feet, sped along as easily as if she had been at sea. The water about us looked somewhat disturbed, as if the preceding ships, either by actual contact with the ground, or by the wash on the sides of the Canal which their passage occasioned, had troubled the waters; but we went along. When we first slackened speed, in order to keep the required pace, the ship which followed us showed a disposition to run up and attempt to pass—an attempt which was of course thwarted. I mention it to show that there were irregularities committed in endeavours to get forward places, which might have led to blocks and difficulties, and which were extremely inconsiderate at a time when the object of every ship admitted should have been to make a fair trial of the capabilities of the passage. We sounded continually. The lead was heaved by Italian, not English, sailors, but I was assured that they were finding on this first day never less than 23 English feet of water, and sometimes as many as 30 feet. I am afraid, however, that we did not test the very shallowest parts, or that there was some mistake in the reduction of the soundings to English measure. However, those before us were advancing, great and small; the greatest draught being 18 or 19 feet—that of the *Peluse*, a French ship.


Only a dreary expanse of shoal-water and inundation is visible from the northern end of the Canal.



Lake Menzaleh, which in these latter days has been more a swamp than a lake, is extensive and unvaried. The Canal has been driven through it by dredging, and the Canal's banks are the only pieces of continuous hard ground that traverse its waters. On these are a few huts and stations for the workmen whom we saw at work on the finishing processes. Some were driving piles for warps, some completing the banks and slopes, or excavating small basins at the sides, and all working hard apparently. Donkeys, mules, and camels were carrying on their backs the earth that had to be moved, and the groups presented a picturesque scene to the artist, if rather a primitive one to the engineer. I have in my lifetime done some pieces of work by negro-labour, Bales, and can form an idea of the difficulty of pushing forward such a labour as this by means of Egyptians and Arabs obstinately wedded to old thriftless ways, and persistently wasting the labour of their hands by rejecting method and order. The dredging-machinery and the plant used in making the Canal had been got out of sight somehow or other, and I was astonished that I saw so few evidences of work which, I heard, was kept briskly going up to the 15th or 16th.

Our amusement was to watch the small steamers, some of them passage-boats, and some belonging to the works, which frequently went up and down, using greater speed than we could dare to put on, and to return heartily their hearty salutations. We noted, too, the enormous flights of wild-fowl on the lake, and

saw now and then the ibis at home. It was a relief to the eye when, towards evening, some high ground and an extent of dry land, the famed Wilderness of Zin, I suppose, were discernible. The hillsides were distinctly stratified, and there was just enough undulation in the plain to assist the light and air in making a glorious prospect. The sun was sinking, and the air, gently simmering through some agency of the climate, received the rich purple light, which overspreads with its warmth all the views that I have seen in the land of Egypt. We knew that we saw a desert, yet it looked an Eden ; the foregrounds lovely in rich light and shadow, and the distances showing a mirage of rocks and mountains and cities, all glowing in a soft and many-coloured light. But as the sun approached the horizon the purples dissolved into all the colours of the rainbow, red and yellow ruling in the sky—a prodigality of colour, an enchanted scene. And gliding along on an even keel, we sat in silence in the genial evening watching the dying beauty of the day, which did not die, for there was no obscurity, no damp of night, no eclipse of beauty. Before the sun was down the moon was up, and her silver stole timidly over the lone region, as if deprecating rivalry with the great light which had just sunk in surpassing glory. But she rose in heaven with a glory all her own, touching the waters with her sheen, and bathing the desert in amber beams. Long sharp shadows from the rigging fell on the elsewhere illuminated deck ; the Egyptian night was




calm and without a cloud ; and I listened to a voice, soft, gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman, extolling the tranquil scene, and giving token how truly nature's loveliness had touched an ingenuous soul. This was enjoyment, but it was not destined to endure. There is a hoarse screaming whistle from the steamer in front of us ; she stops, we stop. "What the devil is the matter?" issues from some dozen throats at once. Nobody replies, for nobody knows. "There it is! I knew it!" sings out every croaker. "It's all up; we shall have to scramble ashore, and walk to Ismailia ; pleasant fix!" And then followed a rumour, derived none could say whence, which affirmed that the ships in front were all aground, and our chance of passing completely hopeless. Some were for going at once on shore and seeking camels to take them and their baggage on ; some, a little more rational, advised the postponement of the step till morning ; but the counsel which, backed by the ladies as before, ultimately prevailed, was to pull ahead in the boats and endeavour to ascertain the real state of the case. As I entertained apprehension of nothing worse than a short delay, I did not go in the boats, but watched their course, as far as I could see it, from the forecastle. It was not very long before they returned without any certain information, but with their fears strengthened, and bidding us to expect the worst. Again it was proclaimed a "precious mess," and again proposals were made to go on shore and seek conveyances ; but before the hubbub

and fretting had been succeeded by action, some important intelligence had arrived. One of the party, determined to find out how things were, had landed, and trudged along the bank till he reached ships far before our own. He was now seen returning tired and slowly through the heavy sand. While we were lowering a boat to take him off, he informed us at the top of his voice that there was nothing at all the matter; but that orders had been sent from Ismaïlia, where the leading ships already were, for no more ships to enter the harbour that night, but to anchor in the Canal till morning. Thus this alarm, too, ended, and we now waited patiently for the day.

Early on the 18th we emerged from the Canal and entered the waters of Lake Timseh, which may now be called the harbour of Ismaïlia,—and a splendid basin it is. On the north-west shore is the new town, which now was gleaming with as many colours as Port Saïd was the day before. The ships in harbour, too, were in holiday trim. We advanced and took up our appointed berth, having now penetrated without accident some fifty miles from the Mediterranean into Egypt.

Ismaïlia viewed from the water is a pleasant sight. The palace built for the reception of the illustrious guests of to-day is what first arrests the eye. Large as it is, you are told that it was built in three months, which would be a very marvellous circumstance if the growth of the whole town had not been rapid in proportion. The ships are not so numerous



nor so closely packed as they were in Port Saïd ; and when the men-of-war begin to fire, as they soon do, they are more tolerable than the huge dark masses which were vomiting their fire almost into each other's sides on the 16th. And, apropos of that, I observed a curious performance connected with the firing of heavy guns from some of the foreign ships. The guns were never run in to load, but immediately after each discharge a head was thrust through the port-hole, and a sailor, with a sponge in his hand, took his seat astride on the muzzle of the gun. From this position he sponged and rammed. I need not add that, in real warfare, a man so exposing himself must be slain by a rifle-bullet immediately.

It was the landing of the Empress of the French which gave occasion for the firing which I have mentioned ; and the firing is followed by deafening shouts from the shore as she takes her way to the palace which has sprung up as rapidly almost as did Aladdin's. She is to inspect the wonders of the new town and to witness the horsemanship of Arab chiefs for a morning's entertainment, and at night she is to grace a grand ball at the palace. Here let me relate an anecdote. On board the same ship with myself was an Italian gentleman of middle age, clever, spirited, quaint, reckless, pleasant. I sometimes thought he was Italian by mistake, and intended for an Irishman, for which character he had the further qualification of being somewhat out at elbows. He had been *capitaine*, exile, wanderer, writer ; had worked his passage

home from Australia in an English ship ; spoke four languages well ; smoked twenty cigars a-day ; had had several duels, and had like to have slain one ; and knew a short road to a lady's heart. (I know a pair of bright eyes that would look severely on this last expression if they could see it ; but *fiat justitia*, you know, Bales, I must be honest.) He had got an invitation from the Viceroy to attend the *fêtes* in some capacity or other, and he had made himself a favourite with all on board. This hero happened to be on shore at the moment when the Empress was about to mount a camel, probably for the first time in her life. The richly-caparisoned animal was on its knees and haunches to receive its fair burden, and Eugenie, sitting well forward of the hump, was about to order that the animal should rise, when the Italian, who knew something about camels, as he did about most things, taking his cigar from his mouth, called out to her, "Tenez-vous en arrière, ou vous ferez la culbute" !* This is not the style in which imperial personages are generally addressed, but the gracious lady with real dignity accepted the honest advice. She bowed kindly, saying, "Je vous remercie, monsieur ;" and immediately altered her position. The camel, in rising, lengthens its hind legs first. And while I am digressing, let me introduce a message for madame. The Empress, when on the camel, wore a yellow alpaca dress and jacket of the same, a large Leghorn hat, and a yellow veil.


* Hold yourself back, or you will turn a somersault.



I landed before noon at one end of the town, and found myself on a strand of deep loose sand, crowded with Mussulmans and cattle, and showing a few temporary houses, with many sheds and tents. There is now something like a native population to be seen. At Port Said there were so many strangers of all nations, that the town seemed to belong no more to the Egyptians than it did to the Germans or the English. Now, however, the predominance of the turban and the fez showed clearly who were at home and who were not. Before I was off the beach I saw a sight which proved how different from those of Europe are the modes that prevail here. One of the faithful who was moving some wood incurred the wrath of his employer, a fat Mohammedan, who let into him with a pole a yard and a half long, and about the thickness of a man's arm, belabouring him unmercifully, falling into the most violent rage, and venting his wrath in words as well as blows. What with the dress and the exaggerated action, the incident was so like what one sees in a pantomime, that I could not refrain from laughing, though it was certainly no joke to the poor *fellah*.

A very few steps in from the sea-beach you come upon the fresh-water canal which flows through the town. The part which I saw looked muddy, and one could guess why; for there were savages standing in it, and cattle brought to drink were allowed to go into it too. Through nasty sheds, very nasty animals, and particularly nasty people, I had to pass about a

hundred yards along the banks, encountering terrible odours before I reached a bridge which allowed me to cross to the more respectable part of the town. Here was a fair broad street, with a hard road (the other ways were all loose sand), and along this I passed, observing the houses on either side, some of which were very good. Most of them were detached, and stood among trees, shrubs, or flowers, so that this town in the desert has rather a pleasing appearance. Some way on towards the palace there was a square, with hotels and baths in it, and on one side thereof were donkeys for hire—the only public conveyance. It was broiling hot, and I did not fancy walking on the sand. On the other hand, I was somewhat squeamish about exhibiting myself on the outside of a donkey, and there was a conflict of emotions. Exhausted nature prevailed over pride, and I approached a donkey-proprietor, making signs that I wished to know the price per hour. He understood me perfectly, and said, “Ten shilling—hour.” I was convinced that he must use the word *shilling* for some other coin, and, having compassion upon his ignorance, took some pains to satisfy him of his error. But he was quite intelligent and wide awake. “Half-suvvern,” he said; “muss pay; all donkey wanted.” He was fixed as *kismet*, utterly immovable, but a rogue who had overshot his mark. A reasonable advance of price must have been, of necessity, submitted to on the occasion; but this rascal’s assurance defeated its object, and I was glad, later in the day, to see his



animals standing apparently fresh and unnoticed. I made a push now for the palace, in viewing which I expected at any rate a solid footing instead of the sand, and shelter from the sun ; but when I got there I was informed that visitors were not admitted, as preparations for the ball at night were in progress. Foiled here, I and some friends whom I had joined looked at the outside of the building, which is plain, but lofty and extensive. (The inside I saw at a later hour.) It has a plantation of palm-trees round it, and is separated by a low wall from the road. Afterwards, attracted by a green grove just beyond, we entered an enclosure, and were most politely received by M. Pierre, the manager of the fresh-water works, whose domain this was. He was good enough to take us over his garden, where, by sluices, jets, and artificial rain drawn from the Nile, he has contrived to raise vegetables innumerable, and to surround his house with elegant plants and flowers. Splendid creepers, convolvuluses, the magnificent poinsettia, oleanders, and I know not what other gay blossoms mingling with rich green leaves, shaded walks, and pavilions overrun with climbing plants, and with the moisture dripping all round them, hardly suffered the mind to realise what this spot was some six years since—the very heart of an African wilderness. We were also gratified by the sight of a pond absolutely full of the celebrated lotus-plant, whose large leaves nearly hid all the water. The fruit, dark in colour, is shaped like a saucer with a cover on it (I do not

know how better to describe it), and it is pierced with numerous holes, or rather tubes, visible in the upper surface, and descending through the fruit to the lower. The diameter is three inches, or thereabouts. In a word, it much resembles the rose of a watering-pot. Having shown us his pretty fresh grounds, and presented us with fruit and flowers, M. Pierre added to his favours by showing us the engines and wheels by which the water is sent over Ismailia, and to Port Saïd and the stations on the northern half of the Canal. The engines are of fifty-horse power, and they send 400,000 gallons per diem to Port Saïd. The price of the water, both at Ismailia and Port Saïd, is 1 franc for 100 gallons, the cost of 100 gallons to the company being 20 centimes. The works cost £280,000 sterling. We had now to thank M. Pierre for the large portion of his time which on this busy day he had devoted to our entertainment, and to take our leave. Let me add, that on every occasion where I had to apply to an Egyptian official I found in him the utmost patience and politeness, and a hearty desire to serve. A great many of them speak English *well*. M. Pierre, before parting, told us that he believed every one of these donkey rascals was well paid for this occasion by the Viceroy, and in strict justice could demand no pay at all. He advised that we should take the donkeys, and at the end of the ride give whatever hire we thought proper.


Refreshed by our stay at the water-works, we now



strolled back through the main street, where we looked at the governor's house, and saw M. de Lesseps ride up to and enter it. We found out, too, the offices of the different consuls, and those of some of the Egyptian ministers; and, heat and fatigue compelling again, I was fain to get a donkey, and a lady of the party having consented to ride a donkey also, we continued our promenade. The railway station and another Arab encampment were visited in this way, and then we went, the whole party, to lunch with the Viceroy—that is to say, we entered an immense pavilion, and called for whatever refreshment we required, gratis! In exploring further, my donkey came upon a street lined by soldiers, and we found out, with some little trouble, that the Empress was likely to pass that way on a drive round the town. Waiting to watch what would happen, we were surprised to see our Italian friend, and self-constituted posture-master to the Empress, coming along post-haste in an open carriage. He charged without ceremony through the troops, who quickly made way for him, and, espying us, invited four to make use of the carriage, three inside and one on the box, the carriage having been furnished, as so many other things were, by the Viceroy. Driving back through the lines of troops, we were soon aware of some carriages approaching the contrary way, and, drawing to one side, we were once more gratified by a sight of the crowned heads and princes, whom we followed, and whom, as they returned, we passed yet

once more. Just after we saw them first our *capitano's* cigar went out, and he reilluminated it by the strangest means I ever saw used for such a purpose. He bade a soldier on duty in the ranks to hand him the weed of some person in the rear; and this the soldier did without making any remark, returning it again to the owner when the *capitano's* was alight.


We went to see the Arab tournament, or whatever they may call it, but I cannot say that I derived much amusement or instruction therefrom. The chiefs were all independent, and had come in with certain of their tribes to do voluntary honour to the Empress and Khedivé. They were enveloped in their long white shaggy mantles and hoods, and with their gaily-caparisoned horses were, I suppose, much to be admired. They rode short, as we know that the Arabs do, and dashed their horses up and down the lists without rule or reason that I could discover, frequently firing, but oftener presenting without firing, while their horses were in career. I was altogether disappointed in the speed with which they passed. Had they galloped like the wind, as we read of Arabs doing, the facility with which they used their weapons would have demanded admiration; but whether they were checked by the sand, or whether their speed is exaggerated, the exploits did not seem at all beyond the achievements of an English dragoon or good rider to hounds. After the rifle-exercise we had some tilting with lances. These



weapons, which are set on bamboo poles, can be either thrust or hurled at an enemy. I have in this case also to make the observation, that the moderate pace, as compared with my expectation, at which the feats were performed, made them subjects of neither wonder nor interest.

Tired and heated though I was, I in the evening landed again to go to the Khedivé's ball. The streets were illuminated as at Port Saïd. We had some trouble in finding a carriage (all the carriages were engaged by the Khedivé), but we did get one, and drove through the many thousand lights to the palace. All the palms surrounding the building were thickly hung with Chinese lanterns, creating a most beautiful effect. The first step into the building showed what sort of an attendance there was. The very vestibule was crammed. We did, however, manage to cross that; but when we attempted to get tickets for our wraps, the crush was dreadful. There was no thoroughfare past the bureau, but each person had to advance through a narrow gorge to the window and then to get back again, the fight between comers and goers being most vigorous. About eight or ten rooms were open, but they were all filled to suffocation. The ladies who were lucky had seats all round the walls, and the remaining ladies with the gentlemen covered every inch of the area of each room. The number of the company was estimated at 6000, and it was by no means select. Very odd-looking Europeans were there in all kinds of dresses

(except working dresses, which I did not see), and some with countenances of a somewhat villanous cast. The Moslem attendance must have been also very mixed; for although Arab gravity did not allow much to be divined from the countenance, the dress and the peculiar flavour of many of the true believers bespoke slight acquaintance with the ways or the water of the *beau monde*. It was not surprising, therefore, to hear next morning of ladies having lost their watches or ornaments; nor to be told by a gentleman whom I accompanied, that in one of the rooms he felt a hand carefully examining his pockets at a time when he was so crushed that it was impossible to turn. I was aware that in the situation which he indicated, a person in eccentric costume, and with a face not benevolent, had persistently interposed between us. That person was, however, in the higher walk of his profession, and did not stoop to folly for folly's sake; for, finding only a spectacle-case in my companion's pocket, he refrained from abstracting that useful article. And, after all, one must not complain very grievously if, where hospitality was so extended, a few social difficulties found their way, but rather admire the zeal and courage with which they pursued their calling; for had any of them been complained of, they had little to hope for from laws made expressly for their protection, or from the pig-headedness of an enlightened jury, but it is possible that Ismail would have summarily extinguished ingenuity and life together.




In one of the largest rooms of the suite were to be seen M. de Lesseps and his party. He appeared to be in the highest spirits, and was receiving the felicitations of his friends as the latter could make their way to him through the company. Any one who had the patience and energy to accomplish the middle passage through the crowd could see that night every celebrity that was in Ismaïlia, and had a chance of encountering friends of whose presence there he had no suspicion. I saw two English officers, colonels of the same corps, gravitate towards each other from a distance at which only the uniform could be recognised ; and when they at length met near me, I heard the surprise expressed by each at the unexpected meeting. Ministers of State, military and naval officers of all grades, civil officials in their decorations, Jews, Greeks, Turks, Moors, Albanians, Egyptians, and one Hungarian noble, in their national costumes, mingling with the crowd of black frocks and swallow-tails, made up a most gay and picturesque multitude, the parts of which, after at first working independently, and resisting, and withstanding, and counteracting each other to the utmost, found the advantage of arranging themselves into currents, after which the eddies and narrows were the only very dangerous places. Wherever it was possible to see the carpets, strips of ribbon, lace, tulle, ruchings, puffs, streamers of tarlatan, flounces, and whole parterres of crushed flowers, were there in ruins ; and towards morning, when the crowd thinned, some of the hapless owners might be seen flitting

to and fro, bare and dishevelled, clasping the dear remains.

The furniture of the rooms, when a piece could be viewed, was seen to be very splendid, and of the newest fashion ; but any comprehension of the general effect was manifestly out of the question. The scarlet liveries of the Khedivé's innumerable domestics, who were laced and powdered to the utmost capabilities of their persons, increased the variety of colours, as the persevering wearers endeavoured to make their devious way through the mass to offer ices and other refreshments to faint beings, who, after grasping the coveted glass or saucer, found they could not raise their hands to their mouths.

The spacious supper-pavilion was not, however, crammed with human beings wedged together as were the other rooms. It was spread with many long tables for the supper, and cross-tables at one end were loaded with ices, fruits, wines, orgeat, sherbets, cates, and every delicacy that could be readily discussed without much ceremony. The less daintiness of the guests, especially the Egyptians, had a rapid way of dealing with these viands, and of disposing of peels, stones, stems, &c., which were not the only offerings which they made to the floor. Even the true believers yield to the potent influence of the times. Who does not remember how secret that old rascal Sheik Ibrahim had to be in indulging his fancy for wine with Nour-eddin, and how he trembled at the thought of the Caliph discovering his horrid infirmity ! And now,



here, in the palace of the ruler of a Mohammedan country, were wines and strong drinks not only permitted, but temptingly offered to the palates of all comers!

It was near midnight when the Khedivé and his greatest guests entered the first of the suite of rooms and began to move slowly round it. Their appearance only caused the crowd to wedge themselves more closely into blocks. Only a very few of the front ranks were gratified by a sight of them, and, after a short progress through the company, the high personages retired to a reserved apartment. After this were begun what were called dances—exercises by which I trust that the actors were delighted, though I own to an inability to understand the pleasure.

This was the last public appearance of the Empress Eugenie during the *fêtes*. About one in the morning she was conducted into the same spacious pavilion where the general company supped; but one end of the room—i.e., the end opposite to that where I have said that the refreshments were—had been cunningly screened by a wall of high plants, and the most distinguished guests sat within the fence. To say that Eugenie the Empress was here seen in a new situation, is to say that she was revealing new fascinations—no longer answering the greetings of a crowd, but conversing freely with princes, animated, and evidently pleased with the entertainment. It is impossible to overrate the influence of this gracious lady's presence on the character of the *fêtes*. The occasion itself,

great though it was, the Khedivé's profusion, M. Bauer's grandiloquence, could never have given them their romance had not Eugenie been there. She it was who raised the spirit of chivalry in the gathering, subdued the strifes and emulations and intrigues of men, and over commerce, science, avarice, spread the gauzy hues of poetry.

We were all satisfied now, and retreated to our boats, which waited duly at the wharf. The deep calm and stillness of the water contrasted with the lights and sounds of revelry on shore. As we pulled to the ship in the soft moonlight, "*Partant pour la Syrie*" first, and then the Hymn, told of the different departures and embarkations.

I must pause now, Bales, but I have more to tell. I am fascinated by old Egypt, and long to make you share my satisfaction. It is an enchanted country, inexhaustible in its charms—Copt, Jew, and Arab, each a study and a mystery, all being actors in its wondrous history. The very light of heaven falls on
• it as on no other land that I have seen, and makes life here a gilded vision. My enjoyment will be short, but so far it is real and thorough.—Yours, Bales, from the Banks of the Nile,

SCAMPER.

CHAPTER IV.


THE VOYAGE FROM ISMAÏLIA TO SUEZ:

AS COMMUNICATED TO BULLION BALES, ESQ. OF MANCHESTER,
BY HIS FRIEND MR SCAMPER.

February 1870.

MY DEAR BALES,— You have stuck so closely to your household gods and your iron safe that it would be idle to ask you whether or not you believe the proverb, “*Coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.*” For my part, wanderer as I have been, I believed it thoroughly—the few instances where it did not apply in my experience being but brief ecstasies of hot youth, exceptions to prove the rule. Whether I sojourned beneath a vertical sun or in a frozen climate, whether my pace was fast or slow, if I gave myself up to sloth, or if I took the wings of the morning and fled to the uttermost parts of the sea, still black care was behind me. The inevitable *Ego*, moving as I moved, halting where I halted, would never let me escape. I could flee from zone to zone, but my consciousness, my trouble, my burden, they travelled as fast as I: heat could not quell a fault of disposition, nor ice remove a pain. Vanity

and vexation, I said. It is but lost labour. I cannot gain a stride on myself. The heavens, the earth, the shores, the woods are different, but I am I. Then one day I passed into a region where the sun's rays seemed to come to us through an amethyst, they were so warm and purple—where every inch of the soil had power to compel the mind, it was so rich in tales and relics—where the figures as they walked to and fro were as though they belonged to some phantasma, some other life where dreams became material and realities fled away into dreamland. Every faculty of the mind was attracted by outward things, and flew toward them as the nails from the Calendar's ship sprang to the rock of adamant; not one could spare a glance inward to observe how it was being wrought upon. There was food enough for thought, but it was food that tempted across the gulf of centuries, and among ruins and in riddles. I walked and enjoyed without stint or fear. I knew it not, but I was I no longer; my identity was gone; I was transported out of myself—not the sky only, but the mind was changed. This transformation, Bales, was wrought in Egypt, where, as it was in the beginning, is now, and, I suppose, ever will be, magic pervades the earth and sea and sky—where a mysterious veil comes down between you and the outside former world, and you are lapped in scenes and thoughts of another existence. I found that I recovered the power of enjoying almost like a child—that memories, cares, and pains were softened down, and the atmosphere was one rainbow



So I lived and dreamed. One only link remained to bind me to the world which I had left—one which resisted sorcery, yea, and will resist. I have never ceased to yearn toward a hearth far away in England, nor to think of the faces gathered round it in the dark cold evenings, where, haply, they talk of me the wanderer, and reckon how long it may be till I rejoin the circle. This link at least is perfect and unweakened; sorcery would attempt in vain. The magicians did so with their enchantments, but they could *not*.

As I read over this beginning of my letter, I think the internal evidence will pretty well prove what I have said about my mental condition. One that tries to pass for a staid commercial man, too! I think I see your elongated face and arched eyebrows as you read. "Poor fellow!" you have been saying for the last five minutes; "poor fellow! I knew that he was a little flighty, but this—this is really very sad indeed. Restlessness is always indicative of something, you know—something very unsettled!" Your forefinger may have unconsciously sought your forehead as you said so; but fear not any serious aberration for the present, Bales. To prove to you that I have not quite lost control of my pen, I will deliver myself immediately like a man of this world. And now let me think—what was I going to tell you? I announced in my last my arrival at Ismaïlia and the doings there. Now perpend as I go on with my adventures.

After the Viceroy's ball there was not much to interest one in the newly-risen town. I saw two or three Egyptian regiments—one lancers, the rest infantry—moving. On the whole, their appearance was good, the men looking for the most part sinewy and smart, and stepping well. The cavalry horses were certainly not to be admired. They were small, and though showing good necks and chests, invariably fell away in the hind quarters. They were over-caparisoned, too. Very gorgeous housings are tolerable on only remarkably fine animals.

Some of my companions went to see the performance of dancing dervishes, which appears to have consisted chiefly of a spinning course in which the devotees went round one after the other until exhausted. Then there were wonderful waggings of the heads, and unintelligible shoutings and groanings, the whole having probably a religious meaning that is hid from aliens like us. Later on I saw some dervishes myself, but could make nothing of their doings.

On the 19th the Empress entered the southern portion of the Canal, and all of us should have recommenced our voyage, but a want of clear instructions brought about considerable delay. We received some silly order to shift our berth, and got up steam for the purpose of obeying it, which when other ships saw, they assumed that we were going to forestall them in the passage, so they too got up steam, and there



was an ugly competition. During the scramble, a Russian ship that ought to have followed us attempted to run across our bows so as to reach the Canal before us. It was a manœuvre admitted on all sides to be unwarrantable, and our Russian friend made rather a bad thing of it, for he produced a collision of which he did not get the best. He hauled off from us ranting and swearing vehemently, and with one of the planks on his port quarter uncomfortably smashed. The effect of the disorder was, that further passage on that day was prohibited, so that we had to wait another night in Lake Timseh. On the morning of the 20th, however, we got once more into the Canal, and sped along for some time freely. After breakfast we were alarmed by a stoppage; and the Canal making a bend to the right about half or three-quarters of a mile in front of us, we were enabled to see what was going on for some way toward Suez. Right before us and up to the bend all the ships were stationary. Beyond the bend, at the very limit of our ken, were ships, diminished to the size of boats, and their masts to fine lines, calmly advancing; but running the eye along them backwards towards ourselves, with sharp scrutiny we soon came upon the masts and funnel of one which did not advance, and which was evidently blocking the rest. This was the Peluse, a ship drawing some 19 or 20 feet. Her hull was screened by the bank of the Canal, but we saw her masts and flags, and the smoke rising from her funnel, by which last sign we knew that she was doing what she could

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to get off, and did not consider her case past praying for. That occupation of watching a distant object is not at all pleasant, especially when it has to be long continued, as it had in this instance, for we looked and looked, but could not be satisfied that the masts moved a tittle. At first we kept flattering ourselves that the ship was slowly advancing, but every idea of the kind proved erroneous ; and after a while we got the mainmast in a line with a rock and a bush from a particular spot on our own forecastle, and by this method soon ascertained beyond a doubt that she was fast. When the stoppage had lasted about an hour and a half, I confess to you that it began to look serious. There was not, however, a very fine opportunity afforded to them of little faith for prophecy or denunciation, because, firstly, there was reason to hope that the leading ships were already close to, if not in, the waters of Suez ; and, secondly, because, if our ship could not get on in reasonable time, the fresh-water canal and the new railway—both tolerably near—presented means of sending on passengers and baggage. It could be only a partial failure at the best, and so the whining had to be done gently. A small tug-boat now passed us, bound, as we soon saw, for the scene of the accident, for her smoke was shortly seen close to the smoke of the Peluse. We at length gave up our watch, and dispersed according to our fancies—some to lie down, some to smoke, and some to pack their clothes, which now they were assured they must send on shore. I went below to write a

letter for the post at Suez, and I wrote for some half-hour or more, when it occurred to me that I would go up and see how the Peluse was faring before lunch. I had picked out exactly the right minute for my examination; for, on taking my station in line with the rock and the bush, our landmarks, and directing my glass on the mainmast, I saw plainly that either the Peluse or we had moved a little—she had moved some yards, or we had swung or drifted a few inches. The change sufficed, however, to revive the interest of watching, and I soon had the satisfaction of observing that the Peluse was, beyond a doubt, once more under way—a piece of intelligence which I was not long in communicating to my fellow-voyagers. As this was the greatest so it was the last hindrance that happened throughout our passage of the Canal. The Peluse must have stuck between the stations of Tussoum and Serapium. Presently after starting again we came up to the former station. The *capitano* whom I mentioned in my last letter had been along the whole line of the Canal before; so he, taking his cigar from his mouth as the station opened to view, said, for general information, “This is Tussoum.”

“Too soon!” answered a staid, matter-of-fact passenger, who was very angry with the Peluse, and much dreaded that she had lost him a week in the transmission of an important despatch to Europe. “Too soon! I should like to know how: anything but that.”

“Yes, of course, it is Tussoum. I am sure of it,” said the *capitano*.

“That may be your view, but you’ll find very few to agree with you. I don’t call it too soon.”

The rapid *capitano* began to discern ; he turned to me and withdrew his cigar once more. “No, it is not too soon, because it is too late ; but it is Tussoum all the same. He is droll ;” and he sucked at the cigar again. The staid passenger threw him a look of compassionate imbecility, and resumed his walk, fuming. It was exactly like the blunder of a farce.


We were getting now into view of some tolerably high ground to the right of the Canal. Chains of hills, trending from the direction of Cairo upon Suez, broke the monotony of the desert. They showed some strata of hard rock. These were the ranges of Génэффé, Awerat, and Attaka. About there the Canal is cut through some comparatively high ground ; and here, perhaps, more than at any other point of the work, the fall of drift-sand into the channel is to be dreaded. That some obstruction, entailing a running charge, will be continually caused by the sand along most of the cuttings, there is every reason to expect ; but this apprehension, so plausible when propounded in general terms, dwarfs rapidly when estimated by rule and expressed in figures. It is calculated that some £20,000 per annum—no very great sum in respect of the magnitude of the work and certain large expenses of maintaining it—will pay for the

removal of all drift-sand from the bed of the Canal, and of that which may be washed in from the banks or with the sea-water. And it must be remembered that between Ismaïlia and Suez, where the fresh-water and maritime canals run in parallel directions, the former will have a very favourable influence as regards the moving sand, by its power of producing a broad strip of vegetation on either side of it, and of thereby lessening, to an extent which we cannot yet exactly estimate, the quantity of loose sand in the vicinity.

After passing Serapium we were soon in view of the Bitter Lakes, which, on this 20th November, stretched out a broad fine expanse of water, particularly refreshing to eyes that had been so long watching the monotonous features of a sandy wilderness. The large area of water, and the apparent depth of it, greatly astonished me; for I remembered—and you will remember when I allude to the circumstance—that it was only in autumn last that the waters of the Red Sea were led into these basins; and, to judge from the time that Lake Timseh took to fill, the Bitter Lakes, eight or ten times as large, would have required a year at least. But there is this to be considered, that the salt water from Lake Timseh had been allowed to pass through the Canal into the basin for some time previous to the severance of the barriers which kept out the Red Sea; that Lake Timseh was filled from the Mediterranean alone, while the Bitter Lakes drew from both seas; and that the

section of the Canal, when it began to feed Lake Timseh, was a very much smaller figure than it is now. In making comparisons at a distance one is apt to overlook these little circumstances which so materially affect results, an observation which might have been suggested by the result of almost every operation related to the Canal. I entreat you to bear it in mind when you read the predictions which are still being recklessly published as to the Canal's future. Stubborn facts, which it was beyond the power of pen and ink to extenuate or contradict, have all along proved that De Lesseps, Voisin, Lavallay, and the other bold minds, knew very well what they were about when they proclaimed to the world what they intended to do. It is not they, but their supercilious ignorant revilers that have throughout the history of the work been found in the wrong. Choose, then, Bales, whether you will follow blind guides who have misunderstood and misrepresented almost every step in this great work, and have done and are doing their best to verify their own predictions, or whether you will trust those who have established the highest claim to your confidence by working out, in spite of physical and moral difficulties attending the execution, and in spite of detraction, these immense designs!

Whether the Bitter Lakes are full or not, it is certain that there is sufficient water in them to allow large steamers to scour along regardless of the exact line of the Canal. As you work out of the long



narrow passage and float into the broad inland sea, there is a disposition to frisk and deviate, to try the pinions, as it were, and feel that the good ship can slant and double, and turn on her centre, and shake the water from her tail whenever she has room to disport herself. In our case, however, the energy called up by the expanse was not wasted in gambols. We breathed our barky and did a bit of business at the same time. For it so happened that a rival, a ship belonging to a company which had had the impudence to proclaim *our* company a delusion and a snare, and to say that our boats were miserable creeping barges, scarcely able to drag their slow lengths six miles an hour, was before us. But our enemies, though they had written a book, and proved their superiority in ink, had carefully avoided the minor test of a trial in salt water. Our skipper had said nothing as the last few furlongs of the Canal were passed; but it is probable that mighty thoughts were seething in his breast, for no sooner did we see ourselves in the open lake than he signified his intention of bringing the enemy to action. He was a mild Italian, with a musical voice, and did not use very terrible words; but his sentiments, taken out of the *bocca Romana* and put into a *bocca Sassonese*, would read thus: "By jingo! here's this backbiting lubber right ahead; he can't haul off, and must show what he's made of. Clap on then, my lads, and we'll bring him to his bearings before he can say Jack Robinson. Confound him!" We began to gain upon him; seeing

which, and instinctively divining our purpose, the enemy spread a lot of canvas, hoisted up his boats, which he had been towing, and made all taut for a race. After this it was soon apparent that we did not gain upon him as at first: it was certain that we could not pass him immediately; it was doubtful whether we could pass him at all. Faint cheers from the enemy's decks; he is taking heart; the betting not at all in favour of our own ship; reactionary feeling; hah! why the devil did you try it? Skipper probably did not know that he was valiant and so cunning of fence, or he had seen him damned ere he had challenged him. Skipper does not give in, though. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri.* He does not, for some reason or other, incline to carrying much canvas, but he, too, is towing his boats—up with them! Boats are got in and cradled; barky seems to feel some relief; she is certainly stepping out better; does she gain at all now? betting very dull; enemy seems to hold his own; he will enter the Canal at the end of the lakes before us again. Skipper excited; everybody excited; it will be a neck-and-neck thing at the worst. No, by Jove! no. We are gaining, though but slightly. Enemy sees it, and ceases to cheer; puts on all his steam; so do we; advantage slightly on our side. In the mid-lake the two boats are nearly abreast; cheering from our decks; enemy disheartened; enough of the lake left for us to get a full length ahead at this pace. We do more; we beat him out and out, and show him the name on our stern

as we go first into the Canal. Hurrah ! hurrah ! The passengers in both ships are as keen about the race as if they had a personal interest in their respective ships—carried away by the spirit of rivalry, like Dr Johnson at Plymouth, when he said, “Sir, I hate a Docker.”

The race has taken us through the lakes, and as the shades of evening fall we are in the last stage of our transit—namely, the Chalouf cutting and the excavated channel between that and the Red Sea. It is amusing to find how the bugbears that were so elaborately dressed up to look specious and frighten people from the thought of the Canal have had their stuffing shaken out of them. It cannot be forgotten how evaporation was to dry up the Bitter Lakes much faster than the Canal could feed them with water, and how the salt deposited by the evaporation was to fill up the basin in half no time. Well, the salt water has run very steadily in, and is undoubtedly, in fact, able to supply the lakes much faster than evaporation can diminish them ; and as for the salt, it seems to have altogether slipped out of notice. Even theoretically the terrors will not bear handling. Taking the probable amount of evaporation over the whole surface of the Bitter Lakes, it may amount, Mr Hawkshaw calculates, to from 9 to 10 feet in depth in a year, but the tides from Suez will send in twice as much water as would thus be withdrawn. The deposit of salt, even if it were not disturbed by currents or winds, and were allowed to settle quietly

down, which it will not be, would not amount to three inches in a year!

While in the Chalouf cutting we were ordered to drop our anchor for the night, that we might enter the harbour of Suez by daylight. There was such a general impression now that we were to get through that nobody took the trouble to misrepresent the meaning of this order, or to make it a text for lamentations. Far otherwise; it was the last night that the same party would all spend together on board, and we resolved that this dinner should be the most cheery of a very cheery series. To this end we went to work with a will, and there being on board every requisite for getting up the moral steam, we were a marvellous short time in becoming kindly affectioned one to another, and in finding out that everybody was the best fellow that everybody else had ever known. We drank cordially to the health of our kind host and hostess, who had brought us under such pleasant circumstances to see these great sights, and then we flung about toasts rather wildly and irrelevantly, fighting off, as it were, what we knew was coming, and was to be the health of the evening. Our skipper had earned the goodwill of every one on board. He was only an Italian, and could not therefore be expected to know the deportment which we Northmen consider essential to the dignity of the quarter-deck. Accordingly, when asked a question, the poor fellow had always given a civil answer; if he saw a landsman perplexed, or

heard him blundering about marine affairs, he kindly explained matters ; and whenever he found the rules of the ship giving real inconvenience to any of the party, he relaxed them as much as possible. At anxious times he allowed himself to be questioned, and had always a comforting response ; and when, after being warned and entreated, we persisted in getting, one after another, between him and his helmsman, he displayed the long-suffering of Job. It had been decided that we should not leave the ship without arrangements for presenting him with a souvenir of our pleasant and most interesting voyage ; and our request that he would accept the offering was to be preferred in proposing his health this night. There was no doubt as to who ought to be our spokesman on the occasion, as there was a person on board whom every one marked for the lead ; but this person could not speak Italian—at least he could speak only a peculiar dialect of it (I have heard him say, “ *Avete upsetto il mio groggo* ”), and the skipper did not know a word of English. Here was a difficulty, but it was speedily met by the proposal that my friend the ever-ready *capitano* should interpret after the speaker. Accordingly the toast was proposed, clause by clause, like the general confession, which method proved to be anything but a detriment ; for the proposer experienced a difficulty which had occurred to Moses in the same part of the world some years before,—he was “slow of speech and of a slow tongue.” Moreover, he put the offer

of the present a little bluntly, so as to have hurt the skipper's sensibility, perhaps, if the original had been understood by him. But any defect was immediately cured, and more than cured, by the ability and tact of the *capitano*. The sentiments were everything that could be wished; it was the language only that wanted smoothing, and this was transmitted to the skipper's ear like "gold from the furnace," as Mrs Gamp has it. It went to the *capitano* good honest Anglo-Saxon, and it reappeared from his mouth flowing and impressive Italian, all the edges rounded off, all the gaps bridged over, and the circumlocutions made straight. The thing was delightful. The skipper's facial muscles were a study as the accents fell upon his ear, and all who saw that he was a little bit moved could not help feeling slightly too. And I assure you that the pressure of the steam was very high when we came to the cheering, and any stray Ghouls or Afrits that may have been about the desert that night must have started not a little. The waesheal of the Vikings was storming their solitudes; the West was upon the East once more; the spirits thought, perhaps, of the last sounds that they heard in that fashion—" *Hierosolyma est perdita, hurrah!*"* I like drinking healths in proper measure

* A writer in 'Notes and Queries,' No. 142, says:—

" 'Hip, hip, hurrah!'—what was the origin of this Bacchanalian exclamation, and what does it mean? I make the inquiry, although I annex an attempt to define it, which was cut from the columns of the Edinburgh 'Scotsman' newspaper some years ago:—

" It is said that 'Hip, hip, hurrah!' originated in the Crusades, it being a corruption of H. E. P., the initials of '*Hierosolyma est perdita*,' (Jerusa-

and at proper times. That it is a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance was very well for a moon-struck moralist like Hamlet to say. As he never did anything but talk, and never meant to do anything, and never could do anything worth the naming, he naturally looked at the dark side of the practice and condemned it as sottish and debasing. But fellows who have any "go" in them know the value of ripening opinions and bringing resolutions to a head by a well-conceived toast. They know how mind takes fire from mind, how enthusiasm passes like an electric current when conditions are favourable, how men pledge themselves to noble acts when in open-hearted fellowship. And they are something of old Falstaff's way of thinking in regard to "your excellent sherris" as a means of freshening the mind for the conception of generous

lem is lost !) the motto on the banner of Peter the Hermit, whose followers hunted the Jews down with the cry of 'Hip, hip, burrah !' "

That the deserts of Egypt echoed to the war-cries of the Crusaders is proved by the following among many passages that might be quoted from historians: "The King of Jerusalem" (Baldwin) "having no longer the Turks of Bagdad or the Turks established in Syria to contend with, turned his attention towards Egypt, whose armies he had so frequently dispersed. He collected his chosen warriors, traversed the desert, carried the terror of his arms to the banks of the Nile, and surprised and pillaged the city of Pharamia, situated three days' journey from Cairo."—Michaud's 'History of the Crusades.'


Afterwards, in St Louis's Crusade: "From the Canal to Mansourah, and from the Nile to the shore whereon the Crusaders had just landed, the country presented but one vast field of battle, where fury and despair by turns animated the combatants, where torrents of blood were shed on both sides, without allowing either Christians or Mussulmans to claim the victory."—Ibid.

The Sultan of Cairo, we are told, promised a gold byzant for every Christian head that should be brought into his camp.

ideas. Depend on it, the people who drink healths are people who admire great deeds and mean to emulate them; who make public profession of their faith in effort; who will hold together to the last thread. Fill up, then, to those that are worthy; there is nothing to blush for in the generous draught; it didn't much hurt our race of old, why should we give it up now? We won't; no, we won't! Fill up there! hip, hip, hip, hurrah! again, again, again! hurrah! hurrah! one cheer more, hurrah! Hamlet be condemned!

Lest you should ask me, Bales, as you are so fond of doing, whether seriously and literally you are to understand the above to be my fixed opinions, I say at once that, resuming my pen at half-past ten o'clock in the morning, I am not prepared to stand by every jot and tittle of this writing. *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur ab illis.* Just now, I think the ideas a little strong; but there *are* times when I would endorse every syllable of them.

Those who desired to see the sun rise and the Chalouf cutting—the stiffest bit of work in the whole Canal—rose by candle-light at four o'clock. I was one of them. There was more work going on here than at any point that I had seen. The Egyptians, after their fashion, seemed really to be working hard. It was painful to hear the number of coughs that proceeded from them. This was their winter, although it felt like summer to us, and that fact may account for the sounds of catarrh. It is to




be hoped that there was nothing worse than a cold there: consumption, or even bronchitis, would be inexcusable in a climate like that.

Fortunately it was determined to form the Canal at Chalouf before letting the waters of the Red Sea into the Bitter Lakes. Had a smaller channel been first formed to fill the lakes, as was done in the case of Lake Timseh, the excavations at this point would have been exceedingly tedious and expensive: for the workmen came down upon rock which had to be blasted; and blasting rock under water, and moving and landing it after blasting, are formidable operations. The parties which we saw at work as we passed were still, I fancy, clearing rocks from the sides and taking away earth to form the requisite slopes. As many as ten thousand men were working here at once last summer; and Chalouf, like Port Saïd and Ismaïlia, sprang to its first stage of township almost by magic. As yet there are only wooden huts there, but these will soon be replaced by more substantial erections if it be found advisable to establish a town there. It was in this cutting that we were startled by some marvellous noises made by our machinery or screw, and by the steamer heeling over on her port side as if we had been in a rolling sea. Things were soon steady again, and the explanation given to us was, that the ship being now very light from consumption of coal, the screw had accidentally got almost uncovered for a minute, when, meeting no resistance, it spun round uncontrolled, making the astonishing

noise and frightening the ship from her propriety. And this quieted us at the time. What had really happened we understood better when we made our return-voyage along the Mediterranean.

And now, somewhere about eight o'clock on the morning of the 21st, we emerged from the maritime Canal into the harbour of Suez, having safely accomplished the passage from Port Saïd. That what had been so loudly and so constantly proclaimed an impossibility had been actually done, and fairly done, we could no longer question, for we had tested its sufficiency and been satisfied. I did not, however, just now indulge in reflection or exultation as perhaps I ought, for I was calculating rather anxiously the chances of being able to reach Cairo in time to dress and attend a ball at the palace of Kasr el Nilo to which I had been invited ; and the chances appeared to be considerably against my doing so. I determined, nevertheless, to make a push for it. A few minutes after we dropped our anchor, one boat came alongside us bringing some official. Thinking she would wait for him I was on my way to ask if he would take me ashore with him on his return, when a gentleman, whose companion I had been on most of our shore excursions, met me and said—"That boat is going to shore again immediately, and we are going in her, as we prepared for such a chance long ago: if you had only had your things ready we might have all gone together." Now I flatter myself, Bales, that I can be a little smart upon occasion, notwith-



standing that you are sometimes pleased to animadvert severely on my ways of doing things. My friend on board evidently didn't form a lower opinion of me when, *ton d'apameibomenos*, I declared that I was in all respects ready, and required only to have my traps brought from the cabin. "Bravo!" he said. "then we go together and at once." Not knowing exactly the time of daybreak I had risen a little early, and had then improved the occasion by getting all my baggage ready for a move, regarding the possibility of some sudden call. Nobody but we three (my friend's "we" included a young lady) was prepared to take passage in the first boat, in which we therefore put off, after taking leave of our kind skipper and his first officer. The rest of our party we expected to meet before long on shore.

My only opportunity for observing the harbour and works at Suez was while the ship was running to her anchorage, and while I pulled to shore. I could therefore only ascertain the positions of the several works of which I had heard or read; I could make no inspection of any. As regards the Canal Company, the only works absolutely required from them after carrying the Canal into the Gulf, were the formation of a channel through the head of the latter to deep water, and the construction of a mole to protect the southern entrance of the passage against high tides and strong southerly winds. Both of these are nearly complete. The stone of which the mole is constructed was quarried at Attaka, not far from Suez. I was


glad to hear that, in dredging the channel to deep water, rock was not encountered : there were some reasons to apprehend that the bottom might be found to be rocky, and, in that case, the operations would have been less simple, and the expense far greater ; but, happily, the difficulty did not occur. Besides the two indispensable works which I have mentioned, the Company have set about the reclamation of land from the sea, using for their embankments the mud which they dredge out of the ship channel. This reclamation is an adventure which, it is thought, will repay them. Although these are the only works of the Company at Suez, they are not the only works in progress there. A basin and a graving-dock are being constructed on the west side of the harbour, and a branch from the Suez and Cairo Railway is extended to them over an artificial bank ; but these last are the undertakings of the Messageries Imperiales, not of the Ship Canal Company.

Coming up to the anchorage at Suez, we steamed past a ship with a piece of new plank, just primed with paint, in her port quarter. It was our Russian friend that had been so anxious to get before us at Ismailia, bearing our card. It is to be hoped that the wood will be a long while getting dark, and that it may prove a wholesome *memento* of the indiscretion of pushing and elbowing.

A fresh breeze was blowing as we and our baggage were carried to the landing-wharf under the guidance of three Egyptians, and lying back in the boat was


a rather luxurious repose. It was the last scrap or shadow of repose that we were destined to enjoy that day. Before we could land, a hundred pushing rascals swooped upon our luggage, and the packages were unceremoniously lifted and were about to be carried off, it was impossible to say whither, by this impudent horde. There was one only hope or chance that those trunks and bags would ever again form a united band, and that chance lay in the very promptest action against the marauders. Accordingly the heads and shins of the most active were assaulted (this was a language which they understood) just as they were making off with the prey; and they being discomfited, the slower villains gave in and dropped their spoil. With great difficulty and a thick stick the stuff was collected on the wharf under charge of the boatmen, who had not been paid, and who had not a chance of being paid until they should be relieved of this responsibility, as we made them understand, notwithstanding their cries of "Baksheesh! baksheesh!" which were strange to us then, but with which we were better acquainted before we were many hours older. In this state of things it was deemed safe for my friend to proceed to the railway terminus to inquire concerning our chance of being conveyed to Cairo, while I, in command of the boatmen, kept watch over the lady and the property, maintaining with much effort a clear circle, round which were clamouring and gesticulating, and yearning but not daring to overstep it, as rude a crew as the fiends in Freischütz.

The sun was getting high by this time, and it was hotter on the wharf than we had found it on the water. I began to realise how tedious service in the lines of Torres Vedras must have been. Heat, dullness, and inaction, with a watchful enemy outside. Now we have a little diversion. Two friends from the ship, Italians, have likewise found their way to the wharf. I send out a detachment to assist in rescuing them from the natives. They are rescued. Their goods are brought into the circle. The Italians are added to the garrison. We feel safe, but we are uneasy at the long tarrying of my English friend. He, however, comes at last, and brings the cheering information that a special train will start before long to take on the Khedivé's guests who have landed this morning from the Canal. This was a relief. We now cause our boatmen to engage a sufficient number, and no more, of porters to lift our traps, and one as a chief to be responsible for the rest, and to arrange the account. When this was done, and not till then, the boatmen were paid for their boat and time, and dismissed; and we, preceded by our band of porters, trudged off to the station. I shall never forget that station—there reigned there such a hurly-burly, such a Babel, such a blind unintelligent multitude, such an utter absence of anything like means to an end, such a worrying of officials by the crowd, such a resisting of the crowd by officials, such runaway trunks on the backs of Arabs, such wind-broken owners in pursuit of their trunks, such frantic endeavours to be under-



stood where every second man was a stranger, such threatenings, such wrath, such despair,—and all this supplemented with an incessant chorus of “Baksheesh ! baksheesh !” As I write about it, the whole infernal rout comes back and makes me feel half mad again. But we had less reason to be mad than most other sufferers. It was bad at the best ; but we, strong in our union, and with something of a plan of operations, had little to endure except a brisk shoving about, and an uncertain and unaccountable delay. At last a train of carriages was run up to the platform, and as there now appeared some prospect of getting away, we began to examine into the claims of the luggage-bearers, and to put together their guerdon, when it appeared that the boatmen had received the greater part of our silver, and the broken money of the whole party did not suffice for the payment of our debt. This seemed, however, no such insuperable difficulty at a railway station ; and it being my turn now to explore the interior, my friend stood by the stuff, and by the more precious charge his daughter, while I worked my way through men of all the nations of the earth, and every species of travelling-mail that was ever invented, to the station office. There I saw a Turk at a desk. I took out a napoleon and placed it before him ; he bowed, shook his head, and gave me the napoleon back. I took out a small silver coin to show that I wanted the napoleon changed into silver. He bowed again, raised his palms, and shook his head. I was not likely to get much out of this fellow ; but

I saw through an open door another Turk sitting at another desk. Him I approached and did obeisance, and then I took out my napoleon again and placed it upon the desk. The official laid his hand upon his breast, smiled sweetly and bowed. He was evidently under the impression that I wished to bribe him into some rascality, and afraid, though not indisposed, to take the bait. I took out my napoleon and my small silver coin together, making signs that I wished the one converted into the other, when the official collapsed and his countenance fell. He had mistaken my meaning altogether, and the shock of finding that I was not tampering with him was too much. He peremptorily pushed aside my money, and waved me away. But I was getting desperate, and let him see that I was determined to be served ; whereupon he opened his empty desk, invited me to inspect the interior, shrugged his shoulders, and smiled once more. My mission did not seem promising, and I was alarmed lest the train should be moving, or my friends should get into a carriage and I be unable to find them. Suddenly seized with this terror, I was making off, when in the passage I encountered a Mussulman of superior mien and dress—a hadji at least, I thought he must be, from his appearance, and he looked and moved as one having authority. “Ha !” thought I, “here is the man that can open the till : the others are thieving understrappers, whom no man dares trust ; this excellent man will give me silver.” And I advanced to the hadji and addressed him in



the French tongue according to my ability, which is not remarkable ; for I will confess to you, Bales, that my French, though passing current in Manchester for something stunning, is in truth not of the very first water. I addressed the hadji, I have said, in French, but he replied politely, "*Nong parley Fronksay.*" I had another resource, my Italian, which is about as pure and fluent as my French. To this the hadji simply said again, "*Nong parley.*" I pulled out my napoleon, when, to my infinite discomfiture, the hadji shook his head as the understrapper had done, waved his open hand deprecatingly towards me, raised his shoulders, and was turning away with a stately bow. I was beside myself with chagrin : I could not contain my vexation. "G—d d—n it !" I said (and you know, Bales, how perplexed I must have been ere such an expression could escape *my* lips), "I'll get change from some of you, or know the reason why." And then the hadji with much dignity answered and said, "Oh, if it's God-damning you're after, I can do that too." Once discover a man's *spécialité*, and you need have no difficulty in getting on with him. "Then, by that honest phrase," said I, "which proves that we have both been nurtured in a Christian land, I conjure you to change this napoleon into silver." "The devil a farthing have I got," said the hadji, "and you are not likely to get any here ; this is only a goods station, ordinarily, and all the paying is done at Suez proper, which is farther up : they'll give you change up there." Then said I, "If you can't give

me change, at least come and aid my party, if haply they still survive ; there is an English lady among them, and it would be a charity to get her safely into a carriage." This draft the venerable hadji was ready to honour. Rolling stock, not money-taking, was evidently his department. "Come along, then," answered he, briskly ; "I'll put that straight." My friends were just where I had left them, sore beset. "Well, you have been a long time getting change ; we thought you were lost," said they. "I have not been idle for all that," I answered, composedly. "I have brought you a gentleman that will help to get us off." Whereupon one of our Italian friends, using his native tongue, addressed the hadji at about the same instant when the young lady said to me, "What does he speak—English?" The Saxon gutturals, especially when gliding over a silver tongue, can sometimes effect more than the *lingua Toscana*. The hadji's fez was off in a second. "This way, ma'am, if you please," said he ; and, unlocking a carriage, he installed the lady therein without more ado, inviting us to follow. But the change ! How were the porters to be paid ? Well, they were paid, I don't know how. Somebody, I think, remembered seven francs and a half in his travelling-bag. It was lucky he didn't think of them before, or I shouldn't have dug out the hadji and *sworn* him to our service. In a trice we were all in one of the viceregal carriages, the last of us that entered being desired, before leaving the platform, to point out our luggage. "All right,"






Illustration by J. M. W. Turner

THE HALLOWEEN BE-FRIENDS US.




said the hadji ; "I'll see that properly stowed ; you'll find it in No. 3 van when you get to Cairo : and now, if you please, I'll lock you up, and if you are wise you'll pull up all the blinds till you get out of the station, or you may get a lot of *foreigners* in with you." Having said which, the benevolent hadji lifted his fez once more, and turned the key upon us. I expected that when our deliverance was complete he would turn into a gnome, or a genie, or something of that sort, but he didn't. I saw him again in Cairo in a carriage behind a pair of horses, when I was driving the other way. I caught his eye, though, and waved my hand to him : he waved his in return. I'll take my — that is, I am positive, Bales, that he recognised me.

For some little while after we were locked up we kept our blinds closed as we had been directed, and it would have been well for us perhaps if we had continued to do so till fairly running away for Cairo. But somehow we never find precautions answer without persuading ourselves that the results would be just as satisfactory without the precautions, and so impunity leads to foolhardiness. If Roderick Dhu had held on by his trusty targe ; if Mrs Lot could have refrained from examining into the set of her *panier* ; if Baba Abdallah* had kept the ointment off his right eye ; if the royal Calendar had not opened the golden door ; or if mother Eve had let

* See the Story of "Baba Abdallah, the Blind Man," in the 'Thousand and One Nights.'

the apple alone,—how differently would a good many histories be written! To compare small things with great, how much more elbow-room should we have preserved if we had kept our carriage closed! But then, who the deuce could? The hubbub from which we were withdrawn was going on outside us just as before. It was only natural that we should wish to see how it fared with those on the platform, and to take a cautious peep at them, as we suppose the spirits of the just to do at those who are still struggling, and screaming, and blundering, and failing here below. First we opened the merest chinks, then we made the chinks wider; nobody came in, and so at last we said, “Oh, it’s all right, nobody wants to come in here,” and let the blinds fairly down. *Mon Dieu!* wasn’t there a rush two minutes after! The *foreigner* was upon us as the hadji had predicted, and he not only crowded up the carriage, but he crammed it full of his wonderful bags and bottles, and kept everybody uncomfortable while he was shelving and arranging the same. The carriage was double, or triple for aught I know; and by the time the train was fairly off, many of the invaders had vanished, whether into air or into other compartments I know not, but our carriage was comparatively clear again. And now we saw the town of Suez, but shot by it full speed. “Bravo!” we said, “the special train does not stop at Suez, why should it? And now we are all snug and comfortable till we get to Cairo.” Oh, how miserably deceived we




were! It must have been a full mile beyond Suez where the train stopped; and from that distance it was backed with deliberate cruelty to the Suez station, where a scene of confusion, in comparison of which the scene at the goods station below was a quiet, orderly, and reasonable scene, ensued. Any attempt to describe the tumult would fail. Again the foreigner was upon us; again it rained trunks and carpet-bags, and cloaks and wicker-cases; and this time the carriages were so full that there was no subsidence or dispersion after the first rush, but rather an increased pressure; for the cross passages were thronged with passengers who never sat down except upon a handbox or a baby, or anything they found lying about, and otherwise passed their time in driving in and pulling out leather cases and curiously-fashioned boxes below the seats and over our heads, keeping us from becoming inattentive or comatose. It was past noon before we escaped from the Suez station and its crush and clamour; but we did then start in earnest, and there was nothing there worth waiting for. The town is small and insignificant, with houses built of mud or native brick, or more rarely of European brick. To the right and left of it all is sand. The railway at first runs just behind the Canal-banks, but it leaves this direction and turns westward.

It was a comfort to be able at last to close the eyes and collect one's thoughts again after all this turmoil. Our party was strong enough to occupy the entire

end of a carriage, so that the trunk and bag movers had no excuse for molesting us. I closed my eyes, I say, and in doing so thought of the weary longings of excellent old Job for only a moment's ease, and the very unusual use to which he would have put that moment. Things must have changed greatly since his days. *He* wished for peace that he might swallow down his spittle—a privilege which nobody in Egypt seemed to appreciate, for they voided their rheum about our beds and about our paths, and contaminated all our ways.


It was a comfort to be able to think over all one had been seeing so rapidly for the last hundred hours, and the various opinions that one had heard uttered in regard thereto. Of this, at any rate, I think we may feel certain—the Canal is an established fact. It will disappear no more. Centuries ago, although great improvers possessed the energy and ability required for the construction of astonishing works of this kind, it might have been predicted how surely their surpassing labours would come to nought. The concentrated effort for execution could be made—it was the steady continuous toil of maintenance that was hopeless. The moment man's vigilance should relax, nature, who never slumbered nor slept, would promptly use the occasion to fill in and exhaust and efface. In ages when a canal could be turned to but limited account, it was impossible that, in a country like Egypt, it could be made to pay the expense of keeping it up—impossible also that the State could



at all times command the resources for that purpose. After the gigantic efforts of a Sesostris or a Neco, succeeded probably a reactionary period, wherein ruin advanced beyond hope of retrieval. A great man could pierce the desert as a strong man rent the oak, but for both came the inevitable rebound—the proof of nature's persistent strength. To-day, however, the conditions are changed. It is not a single nation nor a contracted area that the maritime Canal is to benefit; the East and the West will join their powers to keep open the valuable strait. It would be presumption to say that our science exceeds the science of the glorious old Egyptians. We don't know how much they knew, and we have lately come down a peg or two in our pretensions to superiority; but it is certain that the number of persons who feel an interest, no matter of what kind, in M. de Lesseps' Canal, is immensely greater than the number which could have known or cared about the former canals which were constructed with so much travail, only to perish, or to leave upon the earth traces sufficient to remind posterity of great failures. No man who has passed through the new work can have any other belief than that the civilised world will insist upon maintaining it, whether it can be made remunerative or not.

As to the prospects of the present Company, appearances are such as to hold an unprejudiced mind in doubt. It is clear to the most cursory observer that a great deal more work remains to be done,

and of this the greatest part will be dredging. The uniform depth of 26 feet has not been attained, and it must be attained before the Canal can be utilised to the extent possible. We have lately seen that a ship drawing $17\frac{1}{2}$ feet of water went through without a rub, but I do not think such a passage could be relied on for ships drawing over 15 feet; and we know that to provide a sure passage for only ships of 15 feet draught and under is to offer no accommodation to the largest Indian traders, or to the Australian ships, whose tonnage is already very large, with a tendency to increase: it is, consequently, to stop short at the very line beyond which lies the greatest chance of remuneration and profit. It may be taken for granted that the deepening of the Canal, wherever required, will be at once proceeded with. Another labour not absolutely imperative like the deepening, but nevertheless very desirable indeed, is the provision of wide basins where ships can pass each other, as at Kantara. These will, no doubt, be made; indeed I think it probable that the breadth of the whole Canal will some day be doubled, or, what may perhaps be better, a second parallel canal will be formed. These two services—viz., deepening and widening—are those which principally affect traffic, and which the public will insist upon having done. As regards other operations, they are of such a nature as to leave the Company a choice between a large immediate outlay and a continued drain for works of maintenance. I allude to such works as



paving the side slopes to resist the wash of the water, erecting barriers to intercept the drifting sand, and making branches from the fresh-water canal to increase vegetation in the neighbourhood.

By the time all requirements are provided for, an expenditure of £20,000,000 will probably have been incurred. And we next encounter the question, How can the traffic through the Canal be made to yield an adequate return for an outlay so enormous? The answer which most Englishmen give to this question is, that the Canal cannot possibly pay the original shareholders, and that the attempt to make it remunerative by levying heavy tolls will have an effect directly the opposite of what would be intended—*i.e.*, the tolls will render the route of Suez more expensive than the long sea-voyage by the Cape of Good Hope. Ten francs per ton, they say, is too large a charge; and before the public can benefit by the Canal, the possession and management of it must have passed to other hands. When the tolls can be reduced to five francs the ton, then the route by Suez will be incontestably the cheapest between England and India. But the present shareholders cannot afford to pass freights at five francs a-ton; therefore they will find it most for their interest to incur at once the inevitable loss, parting with their property in the Canal at a fraction of its value, and making over the management at a low rate to a new set of men who may be able to repay themselves out of moderate tolls.

I cannot adduce one word of commercial or arithmetical argument to oppose to the foregoing.* I say that to those who walk wholly by sight the case seems fairly put against the hopes of the promoters. But there *are* men who walk by FAITH; and if ever there can be an occasion when it may be pardonable, nay, almost a duty, to hazard something on the assurance of other men, this is surely the opportunity. Against hope, against prophecy, against figures, against demonstration, M. de Lesseps and his *confrères* have kept tryste and kept time, answering objections by facts, not words. Men who have so frequently proved themselves to be in the right, notwithstanding the grave and specious objections brought against them, are surely entitled to some little attention when they persist in putting forward a decided opinion! As far as I can ascertain, they have never yet receded from the assertion that the Canal will speedily repay its original promoters. It should be remembered that lookers-on may, in their caution, have over-estimated the expense of work yet to be done, and that they may take a too unfavourable view of the present capabilities of the Canal. It is quite right to be cautious, but it may not be quite right to put forward the mere suggestions of caution as of equal weight with the knowledge and the guarantees of men who have the best possible means

* The case of the Canal as viewed by most of our countrymen was ably put by Mr Charles Clarke, president of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, in a paper which he read before the members of the Chamber and their friends, on the 14th December 1869.

of information, and who are content to stake well-earned reputations on their correctness in this particular. I will say once more to you, Bales, what I have already said to many,—“I cannot prove these men to be right ; but, until they actually are seen to fail, I *will not* believe them to be wrong.”

“Holloa ! what’s the matter ? where are we ?”
“Well, we are at the dinner station, and there is a halt of twenty minutes—will you dine ?” Certainly we would dine, and be very glad of the chance ; after we get to Cairo we shall have barely time to dress for the ball, if we have that. Let us dine here by all means. And we did dine. How we fared I do not exactly remember, but I believe pretty well. What I do remember is, that we paid not one sou for either the dinner or the conveyance to Cairo.

It was getting time now to leave off musing and to look about, for the country was assuming an appearance very different from that which hitherto had constantly met us. The same sandy waste had continued many stages from Suez. The surface of the ground, it is true, began to be irregular, and hills, showing much stratification, were frequent ; but the soil, high or low, was barren, and its complexion pink throughout. The atmosphere was pink. Stone, sand, and clay could be seen, but no vegetation. At length the character of the landscape began to change as we lessened our distance from Cairo. Muddy fields first, and then fields with pools of water lingering about in places, attested that we were within the limits of the

Nile's inundation. In some places the water had been retained by small dams when the river subsided, but in most lands there was just the slimy surface which the river left, unbroken as yet by spade or plough. When we were fairly in the Delta, where, I suppose, the fields had been thoroughly and speedily saturated, and where there could be no inducement to prolong by art the fertilising process, ploughing was to be seen, and green crops. Ahead of us appeared suddenly what seemed a long continuous fence made of tall bamboos, but what proved to be the curved masts of very many Egyptian boats, bending some one way some the other, so as to resemble the crossed poles of a fence. We were passing a canal or a natural branch of the Nile. And after this we were speedily in a rich green country, covered with young crops of maize, sugar, wheat, plantains, cotton, and, if I mistake not, potatoes. Groves of trees, too, refreshed the sight—cocoa-nuts, golden oranges, and bunches of dates hanging plentifully among them. This Delta into which we were now entering must be exceptionally rich; there is an untold depth of fat alluvial soil, and a certain manuring and irrigation done by nature in the most perfect manner. I say certain advisedly, Bales, not at all forgetting the seven years of famine; so don't cavil. I believe the said seven years were a most exceptional judgment, and that since the days of Joseph there has not been a total failure of the inundation, certainly not failures for successive years. Now and then the rise of the river is very

insufficient, and for that year in which the insufficiency occurs the country suffers accordingly, but the succeeding year generally yields the accustomed fruits. The soil of the Delta may, I think, be compared to that of Guiana, the husbandman in both places working ground that great rivers have been forming for countless ages. Only, in the former there is a temperate climate, and, by the provision of nature, only one harvest in the year; in the latter there is a tropical sun to ripen at all seasons, copious rains with only short intervals throughout the year, and opportunities of taking off three crops in twelve months.


I had settled myself in my seat, and become lazy and pensive when it grew dark. I took no note of time. The intelligence came rather suddenly upon me that we had reached the Cairo Station, and I had to rouse myself. The luggage was got out with some trouble and labour, but without accident or loss—a circumstance most creditable to the Railway, after such a scramble. We inquired for a carriage, but were told there was no such thing to be had. We had, however, surmounted too many difficulties that day to be easily persuaded of impossibilities; and after waiting a little, we got a carriage for ourselves and a truck for our luggage. We got also the services of a paragon of a true believer, who got the packages on to the trucks as smartly as it could be done, poising heavy trunks on his shoulder and running with them as if they were hat-boxes. He was a

smart man, too, in the matter of *baksheesh*; for, being invited to come to our hotel in the morning to be paid, in order that the time and annoyance of settling with him in the dark might be saved, and that we might have the chance of engaging his valuable services again in the morning, he plainly expressed his doubt of ever getting any payment if he should let us slip now; said he was a poor man and couldn't afford to work for nothing, and insisted upon immediate liquidation. Away, at length, go carriage and truck, and we are not long in reaching the Oriental Hotel, which in the gas-light looks a very handsome building. We found the lobby in confusion, the manager distracted, the servants rushing hither and thither, a very Babel of swearing, entreating, protesting, and repudiating, prevalent. Luggage was coming in in heaps, but none being cleared off. Some fuss about rooms, but we had telegraphed for ours, and finally found we were provided for. With considerable importunity the despairing manager is induced to get the lady's luggage carried to her room. She is out of the throng, fortunately, and the rest of us separate our property into parcels, and wish that it may, some time or other, be moved, as we all hope that we shall go some day to heaven. I caught sight of an address-board, and, looking thereon, perceived an imitation of the name Scamper against 91. I assumed an official air and tried to overawe the manager; but he was past the stage where bullying could avail. Then I laid hands upon a passing Mussulman, and refused to

let him move in any direction except to my luggage. He protested ; I compelled ; I threatened personal chastisement. He saw that I meant to lay on, and took up a portmanteau ; at sight of which a brother *fellah*, and a very smart *fellah* too, mysteriously appeared to his aid, and took up another article, as when, after a first vulture has perched upon a carcass, a second vulture in three seconds emerges from the depths of space and perches on it too. They ascend and disappear. I guard the remainder of my property till they return. I and the last packages go up together to 91, where I find water and light, unpack and wash ; then I lock the door and descend. I afterwards found that lords, ladies, baronets, and squires had been obliged to double and treble up, and that the hall, writing-room, and every corner of the house were occupied by roomless destitutes. I thought I couldn't be such an utter muff after all ! At ten o'clock we met at tea in the *salle* ; at half-past ten we went off, nothing daunted by our trials, in all of which we were more than conquerors, to dress for the ball. Five napoleons for a carriage ! Well, it will take more than that to stop us now. Soon after eleven we are off to the palace, having passed on the stairs as we descended the rest of the party from our ship, tired and just arrived, having all their fight about rooms and luggage yet to come, and perceiving that for them the ball was a perished hope.

The Kasr el Nilo, the palace where the ball was to be given, was soon reached. It was magnificently

illuminated, and at the first step within its gates one was convinced that better order and a more refined style reigned here than at the ball in Ismaïlia. Our invitation-cards were scrutinised at the door, and when these were found satisfactory we were introduced with much ceremony. The Viceroy had, however, left the station in which he had been receiving his guests, just before we arrived; and glad enough, I should think, the poor man must have been to go off to comparative repose with the Emperor and the Crown Prince in a saloon that was *réserve*. There was no intolerable crowd here, no tearing away of ladies' garments, no licence as to dress. There were all the observances and all the magnificence of a State ball. The dancing-room was spacious and splendid; ornamented in the Saracenic style, four-square or nearly so, and very lofty. The refreshment-room was large and well ventilated, with plenty of attendants, and every requirement within easy reach. The supper-room was sumptuously provided, and admitted of every guest being seated; while he might regale himself to his heart's content, as I did, for it was eight or ten hours since I had eaten anything worthy to be called a meal, and then I had eaten in haste, with my loins girded, of not the most delicate viands. The suite of drawing-rooms was very elegantly furnished, and all the rooms were well lighted. The beauty of the ladies (none of whom, of course, were Mohammedan) was not remarkable; though, to do them justice, many of them had taken infinite pains to appear to



advantage, and by no means acquiesced in the award of nature. Powder had been profusely used, and certain other beautifiers laid on with the prodigality of a Rembrandt. In the course of the evening I had the pleasure of meeting again the German acquaintance in whose company, as I told you, I crossed the Brenner. He was full of projects for sight-seeing, on many of which action was afterwards taken. And so, with one agreeable diversion after another, I managed quite to forget the long tiresome day that I had passed, and to be really indifferent about going to bed. The morning was somewhat advanced before we thought of retiring, but we had to think of it at last. As we were going to enter our carriage, my German friend came up and said that there remained something which we had omitted to see, and that we must give five more minutes—that was all that would be required to avoid a life-long remorse. Thus urged, we moved off once more, not into the palace, but round an angle of it, out of the glare of the lamps, and were suddenly in solitude and quiet. In two minutes we stood on a terrace looking over a balustrade across a placid water. That water, Bales, was the mighty Nile under the light of the full moon. Surely it was a spell of Egypt; the sudden sight, the rush of thoughts entangled, many-figured, overwhelming, seized on the mind, and stirred every pulse. This awful stream, knit to all past Time, echoing with a thousand great names, brimful of fancies, the nurse of her that nursed all human knowledge—there it rolled,

past banks that had felt the tread of sages and conquerors, prophets, magicians, builders, mighty men that were of old, men of renown. And I was standing where once Menes stood and the many Pharaohs, where Moses wrought wonders, where Cleopatra stepped from her gilded galley. As I gazed, every ripple reflected the beams, which ran in quivering streaks of light along the sacred waters; the rich moonshine gleamed on masonry and shipping; the shadows fell so dark and sharp that they seemed substances; there was not a wave in the air, not a vapour in the sky. Bales, my boy, it was—— but I cannot describe what I felt, neither can I pass now from the Nile to meaner things till I sleep. After rest I will tell you more of Egypt. *Au revoir.*—
Yours,

SCAMPER.



CHAPTER V.


THE SIGHTS OF CAIRO:

AS COMMUNICATED TO BULLION BALES, ESQ. OF MANCHESTER,
BY HIS FRIEND MR SCAMPER.

March 1870.

MY DEAR BALES,—Did it ever occur to you what important illustrations of national character might be obtained from a study of national oaths? I don't mean fantastic expressions, such as Bob Acres' "odds triggers and flints," or Mr Brisk's "let me perish," but the vernacular outpourings of overcharged minds venting themselves otherwise than in goodwill towards men. It has been acutely observed how much ballads have to do with the creation of national sentiments, but nobody, so far as I know, has traced the relation between character and oaths. I will explain why I have begun my letter with the above question. The idea was suggested to me as I lay in bed the morning after the Khedivé's ball at Kasr el Nilo, somewhere between eight and nine o'clock. You will remember that I had retired to rest the same morning between four and five, after being very actively employed for more than twenty-four hours; and you may

suppose that, notwithstanding the crowd of thoughts likely to present themselves in my first solitude, I was not long in falling asleep. I slept till after eight, and should probably have done so till after eleven had I been suffered to take mine ease in mine inn. But fate ordered things her own way ; my rest was rudely broken, and it was broken by a *concordia discors* of execrations ; that is to say, there was entire concord and unanimity as to the consignment which every railer was making of his neighbour's immaterial and material being, but a harsh, incongruous, and anti-morphic clamour used to express the same. Had I been a rash and irascible man, it is possible that, on being disturbed, I might have offered my mite where so many rich men were casting their gifts into the treasury of condemnation ; but being, as you know, a model of self-restraint, I fell to moralising on what I was obliged to hear, and propounded to myself that little theorem concerning oaths and character which I have just passed on to you. I would have preferred to sleep on, it is true ; but as to getting into a rage, because in such a place I couldn't, that would have been inexcusable. When young Bailey was supposed to be, like young Lycidas, dead ere his prime, and not to have left his peer, Mrs Gamp observed that " he was born into a wale, and must take the kinsequences of sich a sitiuation ;" and in like manner, as I think, every man who went skylarking to the Suez *fêtes* was bound to take the consequences of whatever situation he might fall into. For my




part, the *wale* to which I had betaken myself, though not always a smooth and flowery *wale*, had left me with few losses or injuries, and had presented many delights. I began to feel on good terms with Fortune, and was not prone to believe that every little inconvenience was really for my ultimate damage; therefore, I say, I did not fall into great wrath, but lay and rested my limbs, though I could not sleep. Sleep! well, it would have been difficult. The occasion of the row I could pretty well guess. The state of the hotel the evening before gave sure token of what would happen next day. The bells, I fancy, were unanswered, and soon rendered dumb by fierce pulling; the water, too, though raised through pipes (Nile water, Bales), had unfortunately failed that morning (not a very serious privation, by the by, to many of the honourable comminators); boots and clothes were unbrushed; coffee was not forthcoming; all the world had got out of bed on the wrong side, and with one consent was raising its cheerful voice. But as the world is no longer of one speech and of one language, its cheerful voice was of necessity of many sounds, though of very even intensity while it raved. There were shrieks and howls, roars and squalls, gutturals and sibilants, liquids and solids, rolling sonorous oaths, oaths that went off as sharp as crackers, earnest wicked oaths, appealing tragic oaths, despairing oaths, sudden frantic oaths in chorus indicating that the skirt of a *fellah* was seen in the far distance, composite poetical oaths, oaths of sublime

simplicity. And there lay I amused, while Chinamen, Germans, Yankee-doodles, Gauls, English, Parthians and Medes and Elamites, Cretes and Arabians, every man in his own tongue, gave utterance to what Friday called "de great dam."

Well, I lay and thought that if ever again I should know the delights of a winter evening and an easy-chair, I would make a profound philosophic inquiry into the *oaths of all nations*; and you should ask Blackwood, who is, I know, a friend of yours, to give it a place in 'Maga'—will you?

At last the tumult began to subside, the speakers dropped away hither and thither, and a few only of the most eloquent were yet breathing out threatenings. These last, too, died away in low anathemas. The corridors became tolerably quiet, and I could hear the wretched *fellahs* creeping cautiously from their holes and pattering along the floor as they went about their daily work. There was no more chance of quiet, and, besides, there was a bright sun shining in at my window; therefore, though they had waked me too soon, I did not slumber again, but got up, and had a refreshing wash—wash, I say—for, Bales, my boy, I have not lived in Manchester for nothing. I foresaw that water might be at a premium; and the night before, amid all the hurry of arrival and dressing for the ball, arranged, through a *baksheesh* of one franc, to have a sitz-bath brought then into my chamber, and there filled with Nile water. Oblige me by mentioning this on 'Change—in the hearing of




old Pinch, if you can manage it. He got to windward of us in that matter of the maddapollans, but I mean to show him a trick of Egypt when I get back.

Cairo viewed by day proved quite as prepossessing as when viewed by lamp-light. I opened my window and stepped out on the balcony, in my dressing-gown, to reconnoitre. It was a delicious morning, of about the temperature of the English June. Palm-branches stirred gently against the purple sky; groves and plains stretched toward the city from a not very distant horizon; and mosques and minarets interspersed among high and principally modern houses, all standing, or appearing to stand, among trees and gardens, formed the foreground of a very different landscape from those which met us in the desert. This was my first impression from Grand Cairo; but it was a false and hasty impression, very unlike any of the images of the same renowned city which I have carried away stamped on my brain, to remain there till death us do part. Modern Cairo is no more the Cairo of the mind than Ishmaïl Pasha, in a frock-coat and patent-leather boots, is Haroun al Raschid. In both cases the modern forms are the natural creations of moving time, and possibly great improvements on the old—"but oh the difference to me!"

I needed not, however, to have been so hasty in making my moan over the things of yore. However incompatible past and present may be elsewhere, it is certain that in Cairo they coexist. A turn to your

left, ten steps down an alley, and you have gone back six centuries at least, out of the sight of houses five storeys high, with plate-glass windows and gas and water service, into the real presentment of the 'Arabian Nights.' If you *can* be amazed, this transition must astonish you. You don't for the moment reflect that it isn't Bagdad, it is so exactly like the Bagdad that you have read and dreamed about. There are the little, close, narrow passages, crowded with Mussulmans, Jews, Greeks, Copts, veiled women, saucy boys, and donkeys, jabbering, shouting, struggling, and staring, despite the filth and stench. There are the tall, old, curiously-built houses, with a little stall on the ground-floor of each, just large enough to hold the proprietor and possibly his man or boy assistant, and some of the wares. It is likely that all the merchandise may be contained in the shop when the vendors are out of it; but while they are there, room is made for them by ranging half of the stock outside on the door-posts or on little benches. The floors of the *boutiques* are raised a little—say two feet—off the ground; above that level the fronts are all open, with neither doors nor windows. Cross-legged on the floor, with a pipe in his mouth, sits the dealer, if he be an Egyptian, while his assistant arranges wares and recommends them to passengers. A Jew or Greek proprietor may occasionally be seen seated on a chair somewhere about the premises. Many of the trades have their own particular quarters in the bazaar. Goldsmiths and jewellers are all together;




silversmiths have their proper alleys; and silks, cloth-of-gold, and embroidered stuffs, by far the most showy of the merchandise, are congregated in their separate neighbourhood. The less one sees of the places where the necessities of life are sold the better. The butchers', bakers', confectioners', and fruiterers' establishments, having nothing to distract attention from the dirt and meanness, are disgusting. In looking at them it is a comfort to remember that there is a modern Cairo where *your* provisions are bought. Grocers, chemists, medicine-vendors, tobacco-nists, and chandlers, have none of them very inviting magazines; and as for a bookseller and stationer, I do not remember to have seen such a thing in all the old part of the city. You very soon find out that the gold, silver, jewels, curiosities, and ornamented cloths are the wares that attract you most; to them you go again and again—but one walk through the region of necessities and household stuff will probably suffice. Yet in these latter you find all manner of memories stirred up. You recognise that intelligent cobbler who sewed Cassim's body together, and afterwards, with a bandage over his eyes, found his way through the intricate streets to the very door whither he had once been conducted blindfold. There he is in his little box, just as he sat when Morgiana accosted him. And, by the by, is not that Morgiana herself that has just walked up to his stall, with a long veil and a fillet round her forehead? Then that doctor's shop, with all its nastiness, can be no other

than the shop of Ebn Thaher; and that old party with the turban and yellow slippers must be Ebn Thaher himself, the man who contrived love-meetings for Schemselnihar and the Prince of Persia. The venerable old fruiterer opposite I can also call by name; I have known him for many, many years, although I never saw him in the flesh before. He is Abdallah, and he was once very kind to King Beder. Indeed it all looks terribly familiar, suggesting the operation of magic, from the venerable dervish and staid dealer down to the ragamuffin faithful with their clamour, amongst whom you long to see the renowned Cadi appear with his dreaded satellites and the supple wand so effectual in administering the bastinado. But, as I said before, you leave these regions for the gold and jewels, where the paths are by contrast clean. No sooner do you appear than there are fellows at you on each side. For a moment, perhaps, you are distracted, but you recover your Anglo-Saxon self-possession and incline to your right or left without at all knowing which is preferable. The dealer who has got you immediately exhibits his shawls, necklaces, slippers, robes, and so on, recommending the same furiously. You admire them all, but fix your eyes on something, a santal-wood fan perhaps, which you think you will buy. The conscientious tradesman, who has been watching your look, immediately resolves to add about eighty per cent to the price, and asks you three and a half napoleons, assuring you that it will

ruin him to part with the article at that figure, but that he has taken a liking to you, and is resolved that you shall be gratified. You think even the three and a half rather strong; but the vendor, who is an impulsive, open-hearted fellow, rather than you shall be balked, bids you, in Allah's name, take the fan for sixty-five francs—why should two or three miserable livres prevent the dealing? You pay your money, but are not without misgivings that a little more patience and firmness might have procured you a better bargain. There are some indications that you have been mistaken for a flat—as, for example, the gathering of a very importunate crowd around you, and the shoutings of some individuals in that crowd to respectable merchants further on, who, on hearing the shouts, assiduously unlock their caskets and expand their gimcracks. You are a little abashed at first, and show symptoms of hesitation, but, recollecting that this will never do for a free-born Briton among a gang of ignorant savages, you resolve to show the villains that you know what you are about, and that if you suffer yourself to be imposed upon it is only because such is your pleasure. So you swagger suddenly up to a bawling shopman, don't wait for him to entice you, but at once take up a gold necklace, hung with sequins and crescents, and demand the price. "Four napoleons," replies the dealer, who can speak very badly every European language, and has carefully got up his English numerals. "Of course, then, it is gold," you say. "Oh no—silver gilt," replies the just

Mohammedan ; "if gold, fifteen napoleons," and he spreads out his five fingers three times. This candour rather shakes your resolution ; still, for the sake of your own self-respect, you must suggest abatement. Three napoleons, you remark, are quite enough. The seller signifies by a gesture that he is amused by the facetiousness which you are pleased to exhibit. Secretly you waver, but you deem it expedient not to give in too quickly, so you turn away to some other object and begin to examine it ; whereupon the Arab sets to work with diligence, wrapping the necklace in soft paper and packing it in a box of card—you soon see why. He presents the box to you with a smile, saying, "Give tree." You got off a napoleon any way, but still you think these fellows' prices have a wonderful margin, the extent of which it will be well to ascertain. So you walk on, your crowd of followers having increased, and the shouts sent before you up the alley being louder than before. You want another necklace, and so you look at one. Five napoleons are asked. "Two," you say. "Impossible," is the reply. "Two is enough." "No, four." You try your former trick and turn away to other goods. Your diversion is permitted for a moment, but in a minute the necklace is again pushed before you. "Four, cheap!" You turn away impatiently, when a bystander interferes. "Gold, good, four." You turn savagely round at this intruder, who, however, only smiles and enters into an energetic conversation with the master of the



shop, then he looks towards you and says persuasively, "Tree." This is rather disgusting, and you move away. Your crowd, however, remains, and there is no shouting. You feel yourself almost forsaken as you approach a stall on the other side, where a grave Turk preparing for you takes his pipe from his mouth. But you are not permitted to speak to him at present. Your whole former following moves up, headed by the owner of the last necklace, who holds out the ornament, saying, "Give, give." You are angry, and refuse to be interrupted; you stalk resolutely forward. "Two, give?" persists the vendor. "Go to the devil!" you say. Then the Turk in front comes to your aid and exhibits his treasures. The other fellow is disappointed, and withdraws; but the gentleman who so kindly interfered in your behalf demands *baksheesh*, which you, if you are wise, administer with your cane. Finally you buy a necklace from the Turk for thirty francs, which is somewhere about its value in Cairo. The crowd come up again, but perceiving that your education has advanced, take part with you now, and enjoy the discomfiture of the traders, whom you treat without ceremony, depreciating their wares, and offering for them a tenth of what they ask.

At one of the stalls I saw a facetious young gentleman who endeavoured to attract custom by his sprightly manners. A circlet for a lady's head, made of gold, purple, and embroidery, caught my attention, and I moved it about with my hand, observing its appearance in different lights; where-

upon the youth, pulling off first his turban, and then a linen cap, showed his close-shaven head, and put the circle thereon for me to admire the effect. For this performance he demanded, but did not get, *baksheesh*, neither did he at that time sell the band.

The parade of so much gorgeous stuff in so poor a place produces an effect of barbarous grandeur which is rather impressive. Most likely the same goods exhibited in a commodious, well-fitted European shop, would make a very paltry show. But undoubtedly imagination is busily at work here, and it is much wiser to believe that things are as you see them, than to seek to remove the glamour. Everything in Egypt is more or less enchanted. If the "Nights" were written, as some of the learned have supposed, by an Egyptian or Egyptians, their magic is accounted for. The difficulty in that land is not to believe in marvels.


The night after the ball Cairo was illuminated—rather there were illuminations in Cairo, but they were not general. True to my instincts, I desired to see the old part of the city in the glare of artificial light; and accordingly, after dinner, I again trudged off to the narrow streets. All was gloomy there, however, and as the ways were neither smooth nor clean, I found groping my way far from pleasant. After I had walked some time a glare of light appeared in the distance, and a confused noise indicated that something was astir. The light came nearer, and so did a series of loud shouts, which at last took the

sound of *Huarda, huarda*, as three or four Arabs ran by bearing torches, and were immediately followed by a coach containing several persons, after which came two more torch-bearers. It seemed that something sensational was going on among the natives, for more cries of *Huarda, huarda*, and more coaches were soon perceived. Some of these had mounted guards as well as the runners with the torches, and some of them contained ladies from the great harems, whose veils could be seen as the torch-light flashed on them. There being no footway, one had to cling closely to the walls to avoid the tramp and wheels, so I made the best of my way back to the broader streets. Ere I was quite out of the ancient region, I saw, in a place where some of the houses and shops were still open and lighted, a turbaned and bearded orator holding forth to a not very numerous nor select audience in front of an uninviting *café*. I remained to listen to him, but of course could comprehend nothing but his earnest delivery and his gestures, with which the hearers seemed much impressed. First I thought he was a political mob-orator, until I reflected that amid all her plagues Egypt was free from this one. Then I imagined that it must be a holy man preaching and giving wisdom by the wayside to irreligious Mussulmans. But it was the things of my former life that were misleading me. What had brawling Radicals or street-ranters to do there in Egypt? No, it was a very different sort of party, though perhaps of imagination all compact with the disturbers that I

first thought of. The fellow was, no doubt, a storyteller, and relating some wonders of love, or war, or enchantment, for the delight of the faithful after the manner of his kind. The ears of (I will not say the unwashed, which is not a very distinguishing epithet in Egypt, but of) the illiterate are regaled with amusing stories instead of sedition or snuffing inspiration. The deeds of Antar, or some other romance, had been preparing the poor men for pleasant dreams and healthy slumber, not sending them home full of envious thoughts and railing accusations, or of terrifying images of Gehenna.

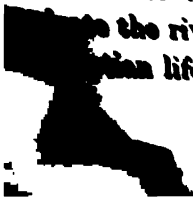
Afterwards I found the illuminations, which hardly repaid me for my tramp. An avenue here and there was brilliantly lighted, but the most luminous place was the great square. Here things looked very gay, and the population were promenading the area and apparently enjoying the amusements, forming little knots round professors of different sciences, all of which I thought but poorly represented. There was a juggler, very slow and with stale tricks; some dancers of a most uninteresting type; some musicians and singers who were a caution; confectioners with forbidding stalls. I was glad to go to bed and sleep.

Not that even this was to be a compensatory night. Five o'clock was our appointed hour of *réveillé*, and an hour before the swearing could begin we were to start for the Pyramids. And it was so: at twenty minutes before five I awoke and lit a candle, shaking off dull sloth; at five o'clock I early rose; at six I





stood in the lobby amid sleepers on sofas and in cloaks, who had no holes like the foxes, nor nests like the birds of the air, and who had not been educated up to the Oriental resource of laying their heads in tombs. We were not going to start in a very great hurry, but our experience of the establishment taught us that an early breakfast, and an early-packed basket of provender, would be achieved with difficulty, if achieved at all. All *was* achieved, though at some expense of time and breath, and while it was yet cool morning we had started for Ghizeh. The drive through the city in the early hours has its peculiar gratification. You see the place far more with its natural aspect at that time than at any other. Very few Europeans are astir; but the Moslems, who are all early risers, are about their usual business. We were scarcely clear of the streets, when, passing under the arch of an aqueduct, we encountered a person of some distinction, Jew or Arab, seated upon an ass and ambling quietly, escorted by a large attendance on foot. He was richly and tastefully dressed, and his long flowing robes, in great measure covering the donkey, saved the rider from the ridiculous appearance which a European so mounted would present. The Sheik or Rabbi, or whatever he was, preserved an entirely dignified mien, and forced you to think of Balaam the son of Beor. Strings of camels passed us laden with long sawn timbers, with casks, with packages; there were oxen and buffaloes in droves; there were country people in

troops. A few well-mounted equestrians passed us, but these were exceptional. Most of the travellers were on foot. A good deal of work, such as draining, road-making, and fencing, was going on, the labourers being women and men in about equal proportions. The women, who wore no veils, must have been of a very low class indeed. The country through which we passed was for the most part bearing crops, but was not much varied in feature. The air was still fresh and exhilarating when we reached the village of Old Cairo. Here was pointed out to us a modest Christian church, said to be the very house in which the Holy Family dwelt when they fled into Egypt. The houses in the village were neat, and adjacent was a large barrack with defensible walls. We were just beginning to find it warm, when, turning sharp to the right and passing a few houses, we saw our way stopped by the Nile. When I saw the river yesternorn, its presence made the pulses leap and set the brain a-spinning: but it might have been the Tagus, or the Essequibo, or the Mersey, or any other full stream, for all the emotion it could produce at present. It was not the stream, but its hither bank, which forced the beholder's attention. The road led down to a narrow strand, all along which, boats as thick as they could possibly lie were packed, with their prows on the beach. It seemed as if nothing could be easier than to hire one of these, shove out, and cross or  the river. But it would appear to be a law of Egyptian life that no transaction of the kind shall

be effected decently and in order. As land differs from water, so there was a difference between the scene on this beach and that which I witnessed at the Suez railway station ; but in respect of the utter confusion that reigned in each, they were the same. There was no wheel nor steam-engine to help the noise on the river's bank, and therefore, probably, it was that the human voice was more freely drawn upon to keep up the requisite clatter in the latter situation. To this day, I cannot conceive what all the discussions were about. There were plenty of passengers wanting boats, and there were plenty of boats wanting passengers ; but the difficulty was to get a passenger into a boat. There was no sign that customers and boatmen were making their little bargains. Most of the boats were without men on board ; and the owners were pacing up and down the strand, exchanging observations at the top of their voices with every person whom they encountered. The customers were doing exactly the same thing. How such proceedings could ever end in embarkations I cannot imagine. In the background were the carriages or other conveyances in which some of the company had arrived, carts laden with provisions and merchandise, horses, oxen, and one or two camels ; the middle strand was covered by people moving to and fro and talking loudly, as I have above described, and by donkeys ; in front, and down a pretty steep and rugged descent, were the boats, unconscious of the row that was being made about them in the

world. I never in my life witnessed such an unmeaning scramble. It was something like the motion you observe on first disturbing an ant-hill, only that this never did resolve itself into any order. And as for the noise, there may be some effects of machinery equally disagreeable to the ear, but I don't think that any other human organs could equal it. The comparison of many waters, and so on, would wholly fail: this was a noise of many Egyptians, and like nothing else.


Now my party and I were in no particular hurry, so we waited a while and amused ourselves with the dresses and outcries and incomprehensible motions of the crowd. When we had had enough of these, we did, what I recommend every one to do who may find himself at that perplexing ferry—we desired our donkey-men (who must be engaged on this side) to see to getting the donkeys and themselves across, and then we boarded and took possession of a craft, speaking no word good or bad to any man. After a time, the owners, during a pause in their horrible vociferation, espied us and came on board, with their appetite for jabber painfully excited, and wanted to draw us into foolish disputation, which we, with stern forbearance, declined. We likewise, with sterner forbearance, refrained from knocking them into the river, and in the end had our heavenly patience rewarded by being pushed away from the land. The waters at this time had more than half subsided, and were of a clear brown colour; but the stream was still strong, inso-

much that, with sails and oars together, it was difficult to hit the landing-place on the opposite bank. The island of Rawdah, just below our course of transit, is said, we were told, to be Moses' birthplace—on what authority I am unable to say. A fresh breeze made the water pleasant; but there were not many craft about—a small steamer or two, that was all. Only two or three other boats crossed at the same time with us, and we flattered ourselves that we had got clean away from the babel on the Cairo bank, the sound of which, sunk to a murmur of confusion, reached us in the mid-channel. But they change their bank, not their affliction, who run across the Nile at this point. On the further shore was another scene of confusion and babbling awaiting us, to get through which, and to find our donkeys and our provender, took us a good half-hour, during which I had an opportunity of examining what looked like a corn-market. In a small square, heaps of different kinds of grain were exposed on sheets—wheat, rye, barley, maize. The wheat, or what was pointed out to me as such, was darker in colour than any that we grow at home, and rounder in the grain. There was no very great quantity, and the sellers appeared to be of the very lowest of the population. Several young girls without veils, and apparently of a very low class, were selling fruit in the same place.

After a certain interval of choosing and mounting, every one of our party was mounted on a donkey. The donkeys are saddled with large soft pads covered

with red leather, and, as a general rule, the same saddle may be used by either sex indifferently. The donkey-men were urgent that our ladies should sit astride, which was of course peremptorily objected to. The difficulty of the saddle was got over somehow, and we started. It is one peculiarity of the donkey-saddle that both stirrups are attached to one long leather running loosely through a groove under the seat. You do well, therefore, to maintain an even balance; for should you allow your weight to incline to one side, the treacherous stirrup will give way, and you may be undonkeyed.

We soon got on to a good broad road, which lasted all the way to Ghizeh. Why we could not have taken our carriages across and driven I never discovered. Donkeys seemed to be the custom of that road, and accordingly it was covered with groups on donkeys. Neither were all ladies scrupulous as to attitude, as some ladies had that day shown themselves to be. Of those we met or passed—and their name was legion—a good half crossed their saddles in male fashion. It was observable, too, that a good many gentlemen unsexed themselves to maintain the balance of attitudes, and preserve the eternal fitness of things. These assumed a reciprocal position—one which an old drill-sergeant, once known to me, who was a superficial classic, and got muddled about his *v's*, would have spoken of, in reference to the other, as *vivâ voce*; meaning, O unsophisticated Bullion, *vice versa*. They let their legs dangle both on one



side, and showed how easily they could adapt themselves to any need—that is, half of them were spilt, and the others laughed ; afterwards the others were spilt too.

It is time that I gave over this nonsense about donkeys ; and, indeed, we were now reaching a point where large thoughts forced their way into the mind. Since we crossed the river we had been jogging along very merrily across marshes, and cultivated land, and canals, seeing not much worthy of remark in the husbandry or the landscape, and excessively merry and noisy, when suddenly we were aware of the presence of the three Pyramids, and interrupted our mirth like chidden infants. The skirts of past time were looming over us ; the religion of the place overcame us. These were the precincts of pre-eminent antiquity, where the spirits of departed centuries gather round the oldest existing works of man.

Perhaps I had formed an extravagant idea of the effect which the Pyramids would produce by their size, for the size did not at first impress me much. Indeed I thought, when first we began to see them plainly, we must be further distant than we proved to be. Another half-hour of expectation and urging of donkeys, and a turn to the right up a rather steep ascent, brought us face to face with the work of Cheops !

My first perception was of an effort of mind to take in the truth of what I saw. Our minds at home are pretty well educated to the comprehension of

antiquities such as we in Europe possess, and I think we habitually associate the ideas of old things with fragments, rottenness, damp weeds, and pity for fallen greatness. It is not easy, then, for a mind so trained, to believe that these solid structures, compact, symmetrical, and uninjured save by scratches of barbarism, belong to a period in comparison of which the *birth* of all our ruins was but as yesterday—to believe that, though they can still challenge Time and Vandal, they are little younger than Day and Night! Now, I say, Bales, that this is a thing hard to be understood; I say that, when you look at the strong, regular Pyramids, with their massive blocks and even joints, you come short of their greatest significance till you have reflected that the world's whole history—its empires, its wars, its religions, its works, its knowledge,—all that it still possesses, and the greater all that it has lost for ever,—have come into existence since Cheops and his fellows wrought the mighty masonry which is now confronting you. When I thought of the works of all succeeding men, the passage, once and twice put aside, would suggest itself again, not profanely, “They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure; they all shall wax old as doth a garment;” but for the Pyramids, there they stand, the testaments of those nourished in nature's youth: must we call them the excellency of her strength; or has she since reared, and will she rear again, such strong men as Cheops, and Chephrenes, and Mycerinus? Well, we have some portion of their spirit in us now,

if we may say no more. Men of the nineteenth century have pierced the Isthmus from sea to sea, and these at least may stand in the shadow of the Pyramids and not be ashamed.

There was a crowd of visitors at Ghizeh that day, and the face of the Great Pyramid was covered with climbing tourists and the Arab assistants. This was hardly an advantage; but a traveller ought to be able to make his own uses of what he sees, independently of the proceedings of others; and indeed it was interesting to observe how little the solemnity of the mass was disturbed by the escalade of two or three hundred human insects, many of whom clearly knew and cared nothing about the pile, except as a thing to be ascended and descended.

I saw one gentleman who had escorted two ladies to the top and back refreshing them and himself after the labour. He was beaming with satisfaction, having done Cheops the distinguished honour of inscribing the name, Thomas Smith, on the apex. "Ay, I done it well; it was on the very top—damme, there couldn't be none higher," observed Mr Smith, in strong Lancashire, as he wiped the Bass foam from his lips with the sleeve of his coat. All the world, however, does not refresh after the manner of Mr Smith. For the poor ignorant *foreigner*, who, perhaps, when Egypt is twice as old as she now is, will hardly have been educated up to the appreciation of treble X, there were water-carriers, with long jars of ancient figure, slung like quivers across their shoul-

ders. Each jar had a metal tube projecting from its mouth, so as to be about three inches higher than the carrier's shoulder; and when any wretched devil of a water-drinker desired to moisten his clay he bought a draught, which the waterman drew cleverly by giving his left shoulder a certain twist into a position which allowed the water to run over the shoulder and be caught in a glass or cup which he held before his breast.

The whole neighbourhood is covered with sand, but the sand is not sufficiently deep in the hollows to entirely efface the features of the ground. There is a fall north and south from the Pyramids, and you go down a sandy wearying road to find the valley in which the Sphinx is half buried in sand. I am sorry to say that the nose of this monster has been very roughly handled, and that the features generally are much damaged. It was told me that the Mamelukes used to make the figure a target for musket-practice—the wretches! The back and haunches are still clear of sand; but the paws, and the entrance to the temple, which is between the fore legs, are invisible. There was a rumour that Ismail was about to have the whole figure cleaned for the Emperor's inspection; but this was never done while I could benefit by it, if it was done at all.

You need a veil while you traverse this ground, and, if the wind will allow you, you should spread your umbrella, as the sun is very hot. I carried my umbrella for some time; but in turning the north-west

angle of the Pyramid it was caught by a little whirlwind and turned inside out in an instant, while my eyes and mouth were filled with sand. The inside of the Pyramid is insufferably hot. You scramble down a very steep descent and arrive at the sarcophagus-chamber, which is all that you can reach except with extraordinary means, and then you find the Arab's candle or torch to be next to useless, and you see nothing to reward your exertion, but are glad to return to cooler air and daylight.

Unless you go to measure or explore, the sight is soon seen. Such vast objects are easily taken in by the eye: it is by the mind that they are long of comprehension. We did not tarry near them late in the day, but it was absolutely necessary to rest and refresh a little after our survey. And while sitting in the shade, I thought how much the great builders had been assisted by the climate. Even these huge structures must have presented a very different appearance had they stood so long in a more northern latitude. Our stoutest granite yields in time to the weather; and we see castles and cathedrals ruined by the decomposition of the stone after a few hundred years, and the images of crusaders fairly washed from their tombstones. But this consideration ought not to diminish in our eyes the achievements of the Egyptian builders. It is only fair to credit them with a full knowledge of the means at their disposal, and their fitness for the end in view. In a country where stone must perish, men who would emulate Cheops


must hit on some other method of keeping their memory whole for thousands of years.

Well, Bales, I have looked on the Pyramids of Ghizeh, and have carried away recollections that shall afford me pleasant thought to the end of my days. We were a very sober party when we set out on our return to Cairo; but we met troop after troop of visitors, all hastening to the scene which we had just left, and little by little we became pretty lively again. On the way we halted to see a garden-palace of the Khedivé, built in the style of the Alhambra, and exceedingly beautiful. The grounds in which it stands are tastefully and elaborately laid out with grottoes, terraces, and artificial water. There was profusion of flowers and fruits, many of which were gathered and offered to us by the attendants. After loitering here for half an hour we reached the gates of another palace, and entered the enclosure, as we were permitted to do everywhere, that we might look at the building and grounds. This was clearly a residence, as there were servants in the viceregal livery in the colonnade, and other signs of habitation. As we walked up through the parterre in front, we came upon a strong gang of labourers making some alterations in the drives and fences. They were working under a taskmaster, who bore a strong stick, and continually laid it on when things were not done exactly to his liking. We wished to see the interior of the palace, and on requesting to be allowed to do so, were told that if we had come a little earlier we

might certainly have entered ; but the Emperor, to whom this palace was assigned during his visit, was expected back from a drive immediately. "Indeed, here he comes," said the officer to whom we had applied ; and we had barely time to withdraw to the other side of the drive when the Emperor and Crown Prince drove up in a low carriage and alighted, their suite coming up in two or three similar carriages. Nobody seemed to resent our lounging about the domain, and the great personages very graciously returned our salutation before they passed in. Of course we now left the front drives ; but not the least objection was made to our visiting the gardens in rear and the stables, after looking at which we moved off towards the river to engage a passage across, as fortunately we were not to return by that babel near Old Cairo. Some of the party, however, who had lingered about the precincts of the palace, came now running to call us back, and to tell us that we would all be sent over in a boat of the Khedivé's. Accordingly we returned, and embarked by a private stair on board a small steamer, which speedily transported us to the other side, where we found carriages, and were taken to our hotel, after a very fatiguing but most delightful day's excursion.

I went with a party to see Cairo races. We reached the course with difficulty, seeing that the last mile of our drive thither was over some remarkably heavy ground, without trace of a road, where the horses gave in repeatedly, and across which we should scarcely

have had the will to proceed had we not seen the world of Cairo all zealously toiling through the same slough. By dint of whip and coaxing we established ourselves at last opposite the grand stand, and released for a while our unfortunate horses. The attendance was worthy of better sport; there was much beauty and much European fashion, and such a mingling of the costumes of all nations in carriages and on horse-back as composed a very gay scene. The stand was well filled, and everything seemed got up for the occasion with much care; the course, however, looked heavy. Tickets had been presented to us for this as for most other amusements. I should mention that before the racing began there was a field-day of the Khedivé's troops on a further part of the plain. About five thousand of all arms turned out and manœuvred for a short time very respectably. Service in the army seems to be here the best instead of the worst calling that a man can take to; and I have an idea that these Egyptian troops would be effective in the field. It is quite clear that they are heartily endeavouring to be so, and that they are conforming to the best European usages as far as their religion and customs will allow. Their music is rather barbarous, so far as I had opportunity of judging; and I suppose it was their best military bands that attended at the race-course, and gave us the Emperor's Hymn as the Emperor and Khedivé came on to the course, and afterwards maltreated a number of favourite pieces. One of the early races, and I think the one




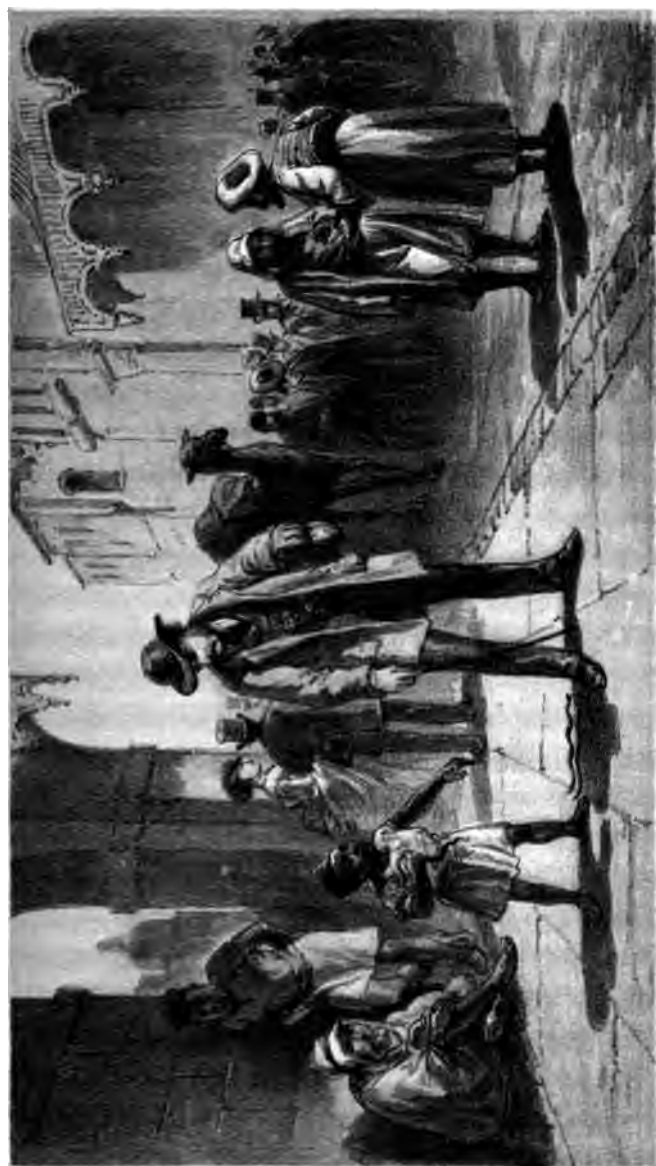
best worth winning, was gained by a horse of the British Consul-General—a plate of £300. But all the races were very slow affairs, not excepting the camel-race, which for its novelty I waited to see. It was a stupid business, the most interesting part of which was to observe how the Arab riders endured the jolting of the long trot. The race was, if I remember rightly, three miles ; and after the first round of the course the four or five camels that started were so far asunder that all interest in the competition was at an end. I left the course before the sports had well reached their height, and went back into the city to procure a little cash, of which somehow or other I had run very short. At the Bank of the Delta, or some other bank where I presented my circular note (for I have forgotten the name of the establishment, though I could find their house of business readily enough), one of the clerks, reading my name, came up to his little wicket and made a keen survey of my countenance. Then he said, “Mr Scamper, from Manchester, is it?” to which I replied that I came from Manchester. “Ah, sir,” said he, “I remember you well, and Mr Bales ; I hope he is still flourishing. Sharp business man that, and no mistake!!” It was that young fellow Keene, whom we thought a little too much interested in that Cleansweep absconding business. Well, you see how these men get on ; he has got a red beard and mustache now, and is a person of some consequence, I can tell you.

I was going straight home with my bag of money,

when at a street-corner a little wretch who appeared to be deformed, his chest projected so, ran up and asked *baksheesh* in the usual way. As I bore down upon him without paying the least attention to his petition, he had to skip aside ; but in another instant he was again before me, and putting his hand into his bosom he drew out a snake about a foot long, and put it on the pavement right in my path. It was my turn to skip aside now, and I did so before the shock of so unexpectedly seeing the reptile had passed. Immediately the urchin drew out another snake and placed it by the first. I was composed enough now to look at them, though from a respectful distance, and I marked the beautiful way in which the two snakes made their contortions in exactly parallel curves, as if they had been drilled to it. After betraying this much of interest in the little villain (whom even the fastidious *Saturday* will probably allow me to call a street Arab), I felt bound to give *baksheesh*. When he put out his hand to receive my donation, I looked behind the front of his only garment into his bosom. He wasn't deformed ; he had a nest of about fifty snakes there—aspics of the Nile, for anything I know. They made my blood run cold.

With all the vigour which the Government exhibits and inculcates, there is, somehow, an immense idle population in Cairo. Idle fellows are about everywhere. They seem ready enough to get a job ; but whether they would take to continuous labour, and whether they could get it if they would, are





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AWKWAPE PENCENTER



questions which I have not solved. They seemed exceedingly sharp, and a great number of them could express themselves, after a fashion, in three or four foreign tongues. The little ragamuffins remind one exceedingly of the Neapolitan small fry. The boys are much better looking than the girls; children of both sexes have the most beautiful teeth and gums I ever saw. Except at the ball at Ismaïlia, I never heard of any of our party losing so much as a handkerchief; and it was worthy of remark, not only that everything turned up right in the end, but that people who got the chance handling of our property took careful note of what they received, and gave an account of all when their service was done. I feel certain that they are not all naturally rogues, though they are not registered A1 in respect of honesty; and that though they may be idle and thriftless (I have no proof that they are so), there is the making of a fine people in them. The Arab villages are the most shocking places I ever saw. The houses, if houses they may be called, are simply shelters of the very meanest construction—very little above the lairs of beasts. There was not the slightest sign of any household property—not even of a bed. I fancy that the shaggy garments which they wear serve them for night as well as day; indeed it is clear, by many infallible signs, that, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, they never *can* be changed. Their cooking, such as it is, is done out of doors: washing may be left altogether out of the account.

My visit to the noted Citadel occupied a morning very pleasantly. As a place of strength there is not much in these days to be said for it ; but as occupying commanding ground it deserves the praise of enabling those who enter it to enjoy a glorious panorama. The city, old and young, the Nile, the green fields, the ranges of hills, the palm-trees, the desert, all bathed in that purple atmosphere which I have so often spoken of, and stretching away into distances which show no horizon, but fade into a rosy cloud, afford a series of sights which delight by some influence beyond their mere grandeur or beauty. There is witchcraft about the whole sight ; a charm hangs not so much over the landscape as over you, the beholder, which, while it makes you thoroughly enjoy, keeps suggesting that it is an unsubstantial pageant, a glorious vision from which you will awake. Believe me it is very delicious idleness to wander about these heights ; but there are other things to be seen besides the views. One of the buildings contains a large hall, rich in ornament and of dazzling brilliancy, with that fairy-palace appearance so often met with in the East. At first I thought it was a mosque, from seeing many believers at their prayers and prostrations, but I believe it was only that the hour of prayer happened to arrive while I was there ; for when, by the voice of the muezzin or other signal, they are made aware that the time has come, they commence their devotions without regard to place or spectator.

A bronze gate, backed by a rich curtain on your

right as you enter the hall, indicates that there is some inner apartment. A Mussulman presents himself with a key in his hand, and, after receiving *bak-sheesh*, opens the gate. You enter and find yourself in a well-lighted and rather gay-looking room, in the centre of which stands the tomb of Mehemet Ali, the first Viceroy. The tomb itself is of marble, very rich, and highly ornamented. It was a rather different-looking place from one of our sepulchral vaults, Bales.

One of the sights of the Citadel is *Joseph's Well*. The tourist who has not properly primed himself is apt to prick up his ears at this name, and to fancy that he has struck the trail of the patriarch, who, he knows, got fourteen years with hard labour somewhere hereabout for going abroad insufficiently dressed. Was the digging of this well, then, the substitute for the crank and the mill? Is it the living record of how Joseph and his butler and baker fellow-sufferers were made to toil when their feet were hurt in the stocks and the iron entered into their souls? Or is it a great achievement of Joseph in after-years, when, having passed triumphantly through the terrors of adversity and the prison, and the still more dreadful outrages to which the unprotected male was in that day subject, he was governor over all the land of Egypt, and wielded its mighty labour power? Pooh! not a bit of it. The Joseph who made the well and gave his name thereto is a very different person from the great interpreter

of dreams ; and yet he is an old acquaintance, too, as you will own at once if I call him by his other name of Saladin. It was that renowned Moslem who dug the well, and he dug it nearly three hundred feet deep, down to the level of the Nile ; the object being, of course, to secure water-supply for the garrison in case of siege. A winding gallery descends round and round the well from the top to the base, having windows at certain levels looking into the well. To get up this spiral incline is rather a stiff pull.

I could not loiter here as I was tempted to do, my time being short, but had to start off, regardless of dust and heat, to visit the tombs of the pachas. These are in a large building, all raised above the ground, and well lighted. Each tomb is built up in two or three tiers, the large block at the base being, as I understood it, merely a pedestal, the centre and somewhat smaller block containing the body, and the uppermost and smallest block being solid. The tombs are of marble, and richly gilt and painted, the inscriptions being, of course, in Arabic. From the foot of each rises a marble pillar, on the top of which is a device announcing the rank and sex of the personage who sleeps below. A fez indicates a pacha. Ladies and princes have their separate signs. Many tombs are covered with baize or holland as a protection from the dust. There are two or three large chambers full of these tombs.

From the tombs we went into the city to see differ-

ent mosques, before entering which they made all of the masculine gender take off our boots. Ladies—not, of course, from a feeling of gallantry, but because an unveiled woman moving about at her pleasure bothers them entirely, and is a thing which their laws and regulations do not recognise—are allowed to keep their feet covered. The mosques are not very splendid, but some of them appear to be very old. The interiors of most are almost empty. A wooden pulpit stands against the wall, and the floors are handsomely laid. In one we saw through an iron grating some very sacred spot (whether a tomb or not I could not learn), where perpetual prayer is made day and night by a succession of priests, each of whom remains on duty for a set time, and is then relieved by another. In another mosque was the tomb of Ali's sister, a very sacred place, fenced round with bronze railings, which the people approached and kissed devoutly as the toe of the black St Peter is kissed at Rome.

When I could command an hour or two I liked to spend them in the wonderful old bazaars where nothing seems to become obsolete. The gold bazaar, for instance, is a labyrinth of close dirty alleys and foul puddles where you may very soon lose yourself. In these dark, mean, and intricate passages, where, with extended arms, you may touch both sides at once, and where a donkey can hardly pass, are collected the jewellers and working goldsmiths, who, some workmen and some merely sellers,

are doubled up in their little boxes as the shopmen are in the fancy bazaar. Here, however, there is no display of dazzling wares to conceal the poverty of the region. You must ask for what you want; and when you do so, a dreadfully dirty Turk unlocks a safe which you have not before seen, and produces ornaments in plenty, or offers to make them to order. Ornaments for the person were what seemed most to abound, and these not of a very elaborate or expensive description. But it was the quaint old place that was so well worth seeing, the gossiping idle population, the crowd, mixed up with donkeys, pushing through the gates and ways, which are exactly of the same class as those which lead to life, and which so few discover. A walk hither makes you quickly understand how Haroun, and Mesrour, and Giafar found out, by personal observation, so much of what was going on in Bagdad. They had only to elbow their way through places like this to understand a great deal of everybody's business. I never saw anything that resembled the body of a lady in a sack on its way to the river; but there were Sindbads and Hindbads in plenty, barbers and barbers' brothers, all ready to talk, hunchback tailors, Jewish physicians, and here and there a jovial-looking fellow, with a merry twinkle in his eye, who might be Abon Hassan, the Arabian Christopher Sly. And, in answer to Master Doubloon Bales's criticism, be good enough to inform that ingenuous youth that the 'Thousand and One Nights' belong as much to Egypt as to Arabia

or Persia, and are understood to describe Arab life in one as much as in the other. If he can get hold of the edition of 1846, of the Rev. E. Forster's translation, he may there read in the Introduction, that Mr Lane, the writer on Egypt, considered the author or authors to have been Egyptian. It would appear, however, that many of the purely Egyptian stories are lost.* We have Cairo, nevertheless, introduced in the story of Ali Cogia, and the scene of the adventures of the Prince and the King of the Genii is Cairo. He is a sharp lad, that Master Doubloon; but, as Mr Weller said to the young gentleman in the hairy cap, "He'd better not show that fine edge too often, in case anybody was to take it off." There was one race of caliphs here, Fatimites, I believe, who exercised all the authority, spiritual and temporal, of the Bagdad and Damascus caliphs, until they degenerated, and the last of them was dethroned by Saladin, who assumed the royal but not the sacerdotal office, he having no pretence to the latter, as he could not claim to be in any way related to the Prophet. The tombs of these caliphs and their families may be seen to the east of Cairo. They

* "This traveller (Dr Clarke) obtained a transcript of the 'Arabian Nights,' which was brought to him in four quarto cases, containing one hundred and seventy-two tales, separated into one thousand and one portions for recital during the same number of nights. This valuable acquisition was unfortunately lost, an event which is the more to be regretted because many of the tales related to Syrian and Egyptian customs and traditions, which have not been found in any other copy of the same work."—From 'A View of Ancient and Modern Egypt,' by the Rev. M. Russell, LL.D.

are plain in comparison with those of the pachas, and are erected in small mosques, each mosque containing three or four tombs. They date from the tenth to the twelfth century, and neither buildings nor tombs are very carefully preserved. One large hall near the caliphs' tombs is fitted all round with large strong doors, very securely closed, except one pair of folding-doors, which I saw open. They, when shut, concealed a series of shelves reaching almost to the roof, on which, no doubt, had rested the bodies of true believers, but which were empty now, except for some fragments of wood which lay about. Whether the closed cupboards were likewise empty or full I could not discover. The door of this chamber is of massive iron, and presents a most imposing parade of security. The fastening is a short stick run through the staples, which any child may remove at pleasure. The great burying-place of the city is here, where the caliphs lie; and there are tombs of all classes, some highly-ornamented buildings, some plainer sepulchres, and the great mass simple graves, each, however, having its distinguishing mark of the family, or trade, or sex of the tenant.

On the way back from the necropolis, I passed through the horse-market and the camel-market, both exceedingly unsavoury places. The jades in the former were pitiable creatures, fit only for the kennel. Of the camels I could not judge, but I should not think any that I saw there a very valuable or desirable animal. Had there been more spare time and

less aroma, I would have waited to observe some of the dealing.

The On of Scripture has been identified by the learned with Heliopolis. Every traveller makes a day's excursion from Cairo to pay this ancient place a visit, and in one sense goes over it, but nevertheless does not see very much—not even ruins. What, then, has become of the city that it should so utterly have perished? Well, a great deal of it, we are informed, is just where it was, and the reason why we cannot see it when we go there is, that it is under our feet. The fate of the cities of the plain—volcanoes—earthquakes—Vandals—are suggested to the European mind when this fact is stated, but a minute's reflection suffices to determine that their agency has not operated here. There has been no violent outbreak of nature, no sudden visitation of divine wrath, no barbarian irruption to blot out ancient On. The cause of its disappearance is a phenomenon as regular in its occurrence as the rising and setting of the sun—a power that has wrought steadily since the days of Noah. Egypt truly is, as Herodotus said, the gift of the Nile; but she is not a sudden munificence, not a capricious endowment. Since its first act of bounty in the youth of time the river has never ceased to give; if it should cease, Egypt would be one desert. We know how year by year the revivifying waters overspread the land, and we ought to reflect that the fertilising slime then deposited is every year an addition to the soil of the Delta—a thin layer almost inappreciable as a

unit, but very effectual when multiplied by a hundred or a thousand. In the course of centuries, then, the gift of the Nile, overspreading year by year the site of the old city On, has at length buried its buildings and remains. The account given to me stated that Heliopolis stood on undulating ground, and that the present general level is at the height of its greatest eminences. Possibly it may hereafter be thought worth while to disinter these interesting remains, but until that is done the traveller's visit to the place will be to little purpose. The most striking object there is the obelisk, dating probably from the reign of Amenemes of the XIIth dynasty. It stood before the great temple of Athom or the sun, and is all that now remains of that great temple, parts of which have been carried to Rome and to Constantinople. The obelisk is inscribed on three faces with hieroglyphics, to this day perfectly sharp and distinct, and is said to bear the name of Osortasen or Sesortasen.

Not far from the obelisk is the tree known as Mary's Sycamore. It is large and spreading, and doubtless very old; but whether so old as the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt, as we were told it is, may be doubted. It has been climbed so often that there are now established tracks up the trunk and along the branches. By this very scale I mounted and examined its parts. I found that I followed in the footsteps of a very literary crowd of predecessors, the interesting facts of whose visits were recorded on the bark. On this occasion England did not appear

to have all the glory to herself, as beside the names of the celebrated travellers William Smith and John Jones appeared those of Alphonse Blancbec, Karl Schafkopf, Giovanni Battista Scioccone, and of several other distinguished Europeans.

It may have appeared to you, Bales, an omission that, writing to a man of such well-known reverence for facts and figures, I have never mentioned the difference of height between low and high Nile. It would have appeared still stranger to you if you had been here with me and witnessed the extreme difficulty which I experienced in finding any one who knew or cared about it. The rise of the river is the event of the year on which their very lives depend, and yet to find information so hard of access! The Egyptians are said to be kept purposely in the dark by their Government, which keeps a meter, and issues notices of the rise so notoriously fabricated for fiscal purposes, that perhaps the mystified natives have given up in despair the attempt to be well informed. This does not account for the indifference on the same subject of Europeans, of whom many that I chanced to fall in with could tell me nothing on the subject, and others told what was incorrect. Of course I made it out at last. It is 25 English feet, more or less, at Cairo; higher up the stream the rise is from 35 to 48 feet; while at the mouths it is scarcely 4 feet. "A nilometer," says Sir Gardner Wilkinson, "stood at Eileithyias in the age of the Ptolemies; there was one at Memphis, the site of which is still

pointed out by tradition; that of Elephantine remains with its scales and inscriptions recording the rise of the Nile in the reigns of the Roman emperors; a movable one was preserved in the temple of Serapis at Alexandria till the time of Constantine, and was afterwards transferred to a Christian church; the Arabs in 700 A.D. erected one at Helwan, which gave place to that made about 715 by the Caliph Suleyman in the Isle of Roda, and this again was succeeded by the 'Mekeas' of Mamoon, A.D. 815, finished in 860 by Motawukkal-al-Allah, which has continued to be the Government nilometer to the present day."

I never half drank my fill of the sights and doings of Cairo; for before we were well aware, or in any way willing to go, came the inevitable day of departure. Somehow hearts don't get very heavy in that atmosphere, but still it was difficult in preparing for our exodus to keep the spirits up to anywhere near concert-pitch. Indeed it was rather a piece of luck for the said spirits that they got moved as they did by the sight of some highly-imaginative accounts which the manager of the hotel had by this time become sufficiently tranquil to compose. The friend with whom I travelled to Cairo, and with whom I purposed to proceed to Alexandria, had an instinctive foreknowledge that the merits of these productions could not be fully appreciated at one perusal, especially such a perusal as we might be able to give them at parting. He therefore pressed on the publi-

cation of the interesting documents, and by dint of some salutary threatenings as to non-payment, succeeded in bringing them to light. When they did appear, wrath for a time displaced regret, our great minds descended to the details of filthy lucre, and we dissected the whole of these arithmetical delusions. Rising from this great council we rent every one his clothes, and decreed that the man who had done this thing should surely die. Which, translated into the barbarisms of the West, Bales, does *not* mean that we desired the death of the sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and lower his demands. To the better attainment of which end we besought my friend and travelling companion to put lance in rest on behalf of us the lambs, and to do battle with the wolf. Right manfully did he fulfil his *devoir*: he had some experience of the lupine nature, and like *Anna Soror* blarneying the pious *Æneas*,* or Mrs Todgers decimating the veal cutlets, he selected for his attack the tenderest places in the manager's system, who, nothing daunted, threw before his body his warlike shield of brass. Our champion did valiantly, pressing the foe till he had to abandon his items one by one, and making havoc with his sixes and sevens :—


“ In single opposition, hand to hand,
He did confound the best part of an hour
In changing hardiment ; ”

by the end of which time the wolf surrendered at

* “ *Sola viri mollis aditus et tempora noras.* ”—*Æneid*, IV.

discretion. Every one of us benefited largely by the result of this encounter. I got relieved, I remember, of an appreciable percentage ; and an Italian gentleman, whom the wolf had marked for a peculiar prey, profited to the extent of one-third of a heavy bill. So this little episode and the thought that we had got the settling done overnight was some comfort.

Getting to the railway was not an easier or pleasanter operation than getting from it had been. We had, however, daylight for the former ; and if I were to describe to you the babel at the booking-office, I should only repeat the descriptions of Egyptian babels with which I have formerly seasoned my epistles, save in this respect, that the last babel was under cover, and in a confined space—a thrice-confounded confusion, the science of obstructiveness brought to perfection, the most involved disorder, and the most distracting uproar of which human nature is capable. It was a serious look-out this time, too, for there was no unlimited delay ; the train was intended to start punctually—that is to say, within three quarters of an hour or an hour of the time prescribed — wherefore we had need of circumspection, and, after using our utmost efforts, narrowly escaped being left behind. Our seats were at last obtained, but the means by which we got them would not have stood a severe scrutiny. I am afraid that bribery and corruption, and intimidation amounting to personal chastisement, might have been so plausibly imputed, that nothing but



an independent and enlightened jury offered the least chance of establishing our innocence—and that palladium is not to be found here. *Baksheesh* and cowhide are very coarse machinery. I grant you, Bales, that we do things more politely in the West, carefully withholding the mirror from nature, and never shocking vice with the sight of her own image.

The journey to Alexandria occupied, as well as I remember, five hours. We reached the city by daylight, found letters, and found also our steamer and our friend the courteous skipper. There was enough of the day left to view rapidly Cleopatra's Needle, Pompey's Pillar, and the Catacombs; also to find out what manner of place Alexandria is. It surprised me agreeably. I had heard an unfavourable report of it, and did not quite see what its great offences are. It is well laid out, and has some good streets and squares. I did not try a hotel, but several that I saw looked large respectable establishments; there were also some good shops. The roads certainly are not well kept, as we were painfully certified when we drove a little way into the country. For all that, the drive was pleasant, as the groves and gardens looked fresh, and the parching influence of the desert was not so hard to keep at bay. I find they have rain here occasionally, the law of drought not extending to the sea-coast. Indeed I knew by many symptoms that I was being gradually disenchanted, that the hues and softness of fairyland were fading, and the hard rugged outlines of the work-a-day world becoming

more and more apparent. I lay down that night in my cabin full of regrets, it is true, but with those regrets blunted and corrected by the thought of how much I had been refreshed in mind and body, and by the retrospect of all that I had been seeing and doing. The ceaseless activity of Egyptian life almost forbade reflection, which came now as a new if a more sober pleasure. How delightful it is to let the boiling chaos of ideas wherewith you are charged settle down, and separate and take lifelike shape, and remould itself in pictures for the memory ! But the digestive process is a sleepy one : instead of the feverish expectation which had visited me my first night in Egypt, came, on this my last, the soothing draught of fruition. Amid spectres of turbans, ships, camels, sheiks, banners, sphinxes, railway officers, donkeys, porters, veiled figures, tombs, and palm-trees, I went quietly and soundly to sleep, my last confused vision being of the lively *capitano*, who, with his countenance expanded to colossal dimensions, was pulling away at a huge cigar, shaped like a pyramid, but not smoking very successfully, and his lungs appeared to be failing, when suddenly the hadji, armed with a railway lever, having at its end a ball as big as the moon, inserted the same into the back of his head, which thereupon became an air-pump, and was exercised by the hadji until the whole delicate weed was ablaze. I forgot to tell you that we left the *capitano* in Egypt. I wonder if I shall ever see him again !



With morning and breakfast came the knowledge that we were likely to have a limping voyage back to Italy ; for the bumping and lurching which I mentioned to you as having occurred a little before we reached Suez, had been attended with the fracture of two blades of our screw. It was now supposed that some heavy piece of iron—part of a dredging-machine perhaps—had been left sticking in the bed of the Canal, and that our evil fortune had sent the screw against it. The steamer had, of course, gone back by the Canal, and from Port Saïd to Alexandria, where we found her waiting. It was not very cheering to see three or four ships drop into port all after time, and considerably tumbled, and giving sad accounts of the weather outside. We had to face whatever might betide ; yet, truly, as we brought our anchor up, things looked as smooth and sunny as they had been lately looking. But the inevitable hour had struck. We had loosed from Alexandria, and were gently floating down the harbour amid the freight-ships and the ships of war of all nations, the shore looking unreal and purple as before, and the city and the shipping flashing back the rays of the sun. We disengaged from the anchorage, and, with more way on, still stretched out our hands to the receding coast, rich with legend and relic, and with the ineffable gramarye of old, old Time. We saw the hills break into headlands, and the heavy batteries armed with cannon cast on English ground frowning down upon us as we neared the sea. And then the distance

began to lend literally enchantment to the view. The mists gathered, but they were the haze of comingling rainbows, not murky vapours nor sullen shrouds. The lights from minaret and lattice and gilded vane still reached us through the tinted ether; and the outlines of palaces and streets and hills, glorified by distance, but distinct and warm and fair, watched over our departure and dissolved unwillingly as we were borne away. All merged at last in one soft variegated cloud. I knew not when I last distinguished an object, or when the scene became but one commixture of mellowed hues; neither could I say when the last fleck of colour waned and a grey sky spake of tempest and of travail.

Thus in soft light, like to the hue of youth, disappeared the witching pageant; thus passed Egypt from the sight of eyes that shall behold her face again no more. I am glad that I have looked on her, that I have made though but a few hasty strides on her soil, that I have exchanged fancies for realities, and that I have memories in place of dreams. And as the wind raised its first whistle through the cordage, and the first billow became crested with foam, I said farewell to her who had afforded me a few gilded days, and felt a desolation as I turned from her.

Ancient of Days, Enchantress, long-descended Queen, Farewell!

And now, Bales, it is a snorer; the white horses are tumbling about, and the good ship, as she cleaves

a billow, quakes as if in a convulsion. If anything can be sure, it is certain that she will exercise us this night. But and if she take us once more out of the boiling surge and within reach of land, then by these presents you will learn, my dear Bales, the safe return to Europe of

Yours, through good and ill,

SCAMPER.

CHAPTER VI.

ABOUT WHAT THE OLD EGYPTIANS KNEW.

August 1870.


PERHAPS it is true that, ever since man first found himself at large upon the earth, and commissioned to replenish and subdue it, he has been improving in wisdom and accomplishments. Interruptions more or less partial we know that there have been, when the world seemed to be going back ; but these may have been only the reflux of the waves in a tide which, notwithstanding undulations, was clearly gaining ground, and majestically overspreading the strands of simplicity and ignorance. Thus the history of the world, like the history of a nation, is a record of the advance of man from the first dawn of knowledge, by a rather unsteady progression, to modern philosophy and arts and sciences ; and an examination of any considerable period of time is sure to show us mankind more instructed and more capable at the end of it than at the beginning.

The above was a universal creed fifty or sixty

years since, and it is apprehended that, even to-day, any other belief may be counted heretical. But what are we to think when the antiquary, grubbing in the dust and silt of five thousand years ago to discover some traces of infant effort—some rude specimens of the ages of Magog and Mizraim, in which we may admire the germ that has since developed into a wonderful art—breaks his shins against an article so perfect that it equals, if it does not excel, the supreme stretch of modern ability? How shall we support the theory if it come to our knowledge that before Noah was cold in his grave his descendants were adepts in construction and in the fine arts, and that their achievements were for magnitude such as, if we possess the requisite skill, we never attempt to emulate? It is not intended to answer these questions here; they are proposed only because modern inquiry is bringing to light so many methods of measuring the achievements of the men of old, and so many facts belonging to their days, that bold comparisons have been made already, and schools will certainly take sides as to the continuity or the rise and fall of intellectual advancement. The object of this paper is rather to recapitulate some of the things which one very old nation knew in early days; and this is attempted not because there is lack of accurate and most interesting information within reach of the general reader, but because the information is embedded in thick volumes, so teeming every one with new facts, new speculations, and new connections, that

the results which they exhibit cannot be reached but with labour and research ; for the learned expositors are in this respect but pioneers advancing cautiously with tablets in their hands but swords dangling at their wrists, pausing at every stage to survey their position, and to do or obviate battle for the ground gained. Thus their works are necessarily diffuse ; and thus it is that the student, rather than he who drinks of knowledge by the wayside, appropriates the lore which they present.

Egyptology, though, like geology, a strictly modern science, yet busies itself with things anterior to all history ; and as the authority for all geological doctrine must be the book of nature, so sound Egyptology must rest on that marvellous book, the works which the remote Egyptians have left for our perusal. But there is this difference between the two sciences ; namely, that whereas there is not reason to think that any one before the end of last century ever recorded a fact with a view to unfold the early growth of the earth, we know now (and we have not known it long) that there were men in the dark, dubious, but no longer unfathomable past, who took effectual means for preserving some points and outlines, if no more, of early Egyptian chronicles. Yes ; they wrought enduring hieroglyphics, which for ages since the Christian era were to the reader foolishness—which were at length, by the power of strong indefatigable minds, made to yield up some portion of their hid treasures, and the full import of which may yet be




unravelling, abounding more and more to perfect knowledge; for the inscriptions are innumerable, and the art of deciphering them is steadily advancing. But while profound investigators are with much travail slowly accumulating their facts and establishing their theorems, lo, Egypt herself suddenly starts into activity, and once more challenges the attention of the world! No longer a worm-eaten, musty theme, relegated to Dryasdusts and profound thinkers, she interests now the active, the enterprising, the politic, the mighty of the age. The days are fast coming when to know nothing accurately of her past will argue an indifference to her future, and when indifference to her future will be a reproach. Every one of us who knows anything at all has a pretty correct implicit knowledge of Egypt—can talk of the Pharaohs and Sesostris, of the Pyramids, the Sphinx, the obelisks—and knows that “ancient,” “marvellous,” “colossal,” “wise,” are epithets applicable to her monuments and her people; but when it comes to measuring or defining the antiquity, knowledge, power, achievements, &c., there is not such prompt utterance. It is good for us, then, to talk over the things which have been established regarding ancient Egypt, and to evolve clear ideas of her characteristics, avoiding discussions and controversies which Time, the unraveller, will probably determine for us, and keeping as clear as we may of extreme views and wild speculations.

As we have not yet discovered any trace of the

rude savage Egypt, but have seen her in her very earliest manifestations already skilful, erudite, and strong, it is impossible to determine the order of her inventions. Light may yet be thrown upon her rise and progress, but our deepest researches have hitherto shown her to us as only the mother of a most accomplished race. How they came by their knowledge is matter for speculation—that they possessed it is matter of fact. We never find them without the ability to organise labour, or shrinking from the very boldest efforts in digging canals and irrigating, in quarrying rock, in building and in sculpture ; and as it was through these arts that attention was, during long, dark, sleepy ages, kept drowsily fixed upon Egypt, until at last the world woke up to some appreciation of her, there is reason for considering them first.

In the first historical reign—the reign of Menes—there was a little dabbling in water-works, but merely this, that the whole stream of the Nile, or of one of its main branches, was diverted from its course to favour the planting of the city of Memphis. The engineer who undertook the job—and tradition credits the monarch himself with the execution—must have possessed the soul of Mrs Partington, with something more than that lady's scientific acquirements. Menes took accurately the measure of the power which he resolved to oppose, and constructed a dyke “whose lofty mounds and strong embankments,” says Wilkinson, “turned the water to the eastward, and effectually

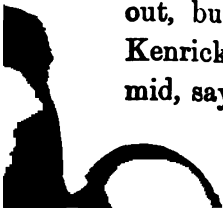


confined the river to its new bed."* The dyke was doubtless shown to Abraham, in whose day the diversion of the river was as old a story as the account of Joan of Arc or Jack Cade is to us. This is taking the very mildest calculation of the antiquity of Menes. And in the reign of Mœris, farther on, was formed an artificial lake, measuring, according to Herodotus, four hundred and fifty miles in circumference, and three hundred feet in depth. This huge lake was fed by the Nile through artificial channels; it received and stored a portion of the annual overflow, and when that subsided, regurgitated upon the river by all the channels, prolonging the times of refreshing, and extending the fertilising influence to land that, without the aid of art, would be absolutely barren, and no doubt was barren before the days of Mœris. Herodotus, and those who exactly followed him, were wrong, it is now thought, in supposing that this immense lake was wholly a work of art. There was probably a natural basin to suggest the scheme, but this was greatly increased; and all the feeding streams, the arteries and veins of the system, were undoubtedly artificial. These last had their flood-gates, dams, and locks, and were managed with the greatest skill. The retention of the waters seems to be all that is wanted to make the wilderness blossom; and yet for centuries and centuries younger Egyptians, although they had been shown the way, were

* Sir J. G. Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*.

unequal to the pursuit of such mighty designs, and in that most essential science were as dead men by comparison with the subjects of Menes and Mœris. In citing these two great works as instances, it is intended to show how generally the power of controlling streams and floods was possessed of old in the Delta and in Middle Egypt, and how thoroughly the value of it was understood by those primitive men. If he who has made one stalk of corn to grow where nothing grew before, is a benefactor of his kind, where, in the catalogue of philanthropists, shall we place old Mœris, to whom, under Providence, it was owing that once dry Egypt had corn enough and to spare when Syria and Arabia fainted from lack of sustenance? There can be little doubt that modern Egypt, now that her soul is returning to her, will ere long address herself to the reclamation of her soil. At first it is perhaps a necessity that she labours to attract the wealth of the stranger; but, her treasury once replenished, she will surely search for and find the riches that may be drawn from her own bosom.

The mass of masonry in the Great Pyramid, according to Bunsen, measures 82,111,000 feet, and would weigh 6,316,000 tons. The dimensions of the separate stones are not very great, but the quantity raised shows with what readiness these old workmen did their quarrying. And they not only got this stone out, but tooled and laid it with some skill. Mr Kenrick, speaking of the casing of the Great Pyramid, says: "The joints are scarcely perceptible, and



not wider than the thickness of silver-paper ; and the cement so tenacious, that fragments of the casing-stones still remain in their original position, notwithstanding the lapse of so many centuries, and the violence by which they were detached. All the fine work of the interior passages, where granite is not expressly mentioned, is of the same stone,* and finished with the same beautiful exactness." But the skill in quarrying was displayed more in the extracting of the huge blocks out of which obelisks and colossal statues were hewn. Obelisks ninety and statues forty feet high, each fashioned out of one stone, were not uncommon things ; and the blocks selected for these monuments were not chance splinters from barbarous efforts of splitting and smashing, but clean slices separated *secundum artem* from the native rock, after being selected and accurately defined. And how was this done—by driving in huge iron wedges ? No, indeed ; that would probably have split the stone. By infinite labour, then, in chiselling and sawing ? Pooh ! the old Egyptians knew a trick somewhat cleverer than that : they cut a small groove along the whole length of, say, 100 feet, and in this inserted a number of dry wooden wedges ; then they poured water into the groove, and the wedges, expanding simultaneously and with great force, broke away the huge fragment as neatly as a strip of glass is taken off by a diamond. They had a way, too, of moving about these vast

* To wit, the limestone of the Mokattam quarries.

monoliths which we, with all appliances and means to boot, would find it hard to imitate.

Now such work would have been very astonishing even if it had ended in Cyclopean savagery like Stonehenge; but we know very well that it ended in nothing of the kind. The separation from the native rock was but the beginning of artistic treatment. Every fragment, great or small, had its billet, and was taken off to undergo a series of transformations; the least that could happen to any one being to be plain wrought, and then set with consummate skill in a building. And now that we come to buildings, it is not desirable to spend time in speaking of the Pyramids of Ghizeh, which, perhaps, are better understood generally than any work of art in Egypt. It is proposed, therefore, to pass on to some of the structures which have been less spoken of, and the history of which is still confined, or nearly so, to learned pages. And, writing twenty years ago, it would have been wise to say little or nothing of the Labyrinth, notwithstanding that Herodotus considered it to be a wonder not second to even the Pyramids. For such have been the destructions and inhumations of this splendid work, that nobody believed in the probability of recovering even its site, and not a few were inclined to look upon the whole account as an invention. The French, however, at the end of last century, affirmed that they had found the ruins; and forty years later antiquaries began to test and verify the French work. Gradually it came to be acknow-

ledged that the foundations, at least, of the Labyrinth might yet be traced, and the labours of the Prussian Commission effected a complete recognition of the remains of this vast building. But there is still much dispute about the purpose and the form of it; and what has been realised is as yet valuable, more, perhaps, because it tends to confirm the account of Herodotus than for any other result. It is certain that the old Greek was not romancing when he wrote of it; and although criticism still amuses itself with finding flaws in his description, so much of that description is certified by an examination of the ruins that it is only fair to credit him with accuracy throughout, and to accept his details, which we cannot disprove. He tells us that it had 3000 chambers, half of them above the ground and half below, and he goes on to say: "The upper chambers I myself passed through and saw, and what I say concerning them is from my own observation. Of the underground chambers I can only speak from report; for the keepers of the building could not be got to show them, since they contained (as they said) the sepulchres of the kings who built the Labyrinth, and also those of the sacred crocodiles. Thus it is from hearsay only that I can speak of the lower chambers. The upper chambers, however, I saw with my own eyes, and found them to excel all other human productions; for the passages through the houses, and the varied windings of the path across the courts, excited in me infinite admiration as I passed from the courts into chambers, and from the chambers

into colonnades, and from the colonnades into fresh houses, and again from these into courts unseen before. The roof was throughout of stone, like the walls ; and the walls were carved all over with figures. Every court was surrounded with a colonnade, which was built of white stones, exquisitely fitted together. At the corner of the Labyrinth stands a pyramid forty fathoms high, with large figures engraved on it, which is entered by a subterranean passage.”* This is perhaps enough to say here concerning a structure of which there is so little now to be seen ; but there is another marvellous palace or temple, or both, at Karnac—a part of what was once Thebes—the grandeur of which a visitor may see for himself. The ground covered by this mass of buildings is nearly square, and the side measures about 1800 English feet. Travellers one and all appear to have been unable to find words to express the feelings with which these sublime remains inspired them. They have been astounded and overcome by the magnificence and the prodigality of workmanship here to be admired. Courts, halls, gateways, pillars, obelisks, monolithic figures, sculptures, rows of sphinxes, are massed in such profusion that the sight is too much for modern comprehension. Champollion, the great French Egyptologist, said of it ; “Aucun peuple ancien ni moderne n’a conçu l’art d’architecture sur une échelle aussi sublime, aussi grandiose, que le firent les vieux Egyptiens ; et l’imagination qu’en Europe s’élance

* Rawlinson’s translation.



bien au-dessus de nos portiques, s'arrête et tombe impuissante au pied des 140 colonnes de la salle hypostyle de Karnak."* In one of its halls, we are told, the cathedral of Nôtre-Dame at Paris might stand and not touch the walls. Denon, another Frenchman, says : " It is hardly possible to believe, after having seen it, in the reality of the existence of so many buildings collected on a single point, in their dimensions, in the resolute perseverance which their construction required, and in the incalculable expenses of so much magnificence." And again : " It is necessary that the reader should fancy what is before him to be a dream, as he who views the objects themselves occasionally yields to the doubt whether he be perfectly awake." There were lakes and mountains within the periphery of the sanctuary.

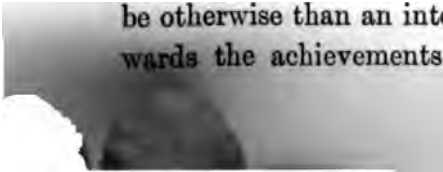
These two edifices have been selected as examples from a list which is next to inexhaustible. The whole valley and Delta of the Nile, from the Cataracts to the sea, were covered with temples, palaces, tombs, pyramids, and pillars.

The magnitude of some of the sculptures has been already spoken of, but they were worthy of the highest praise for their execution also. Critics are not agreed as to the spirit of their chiselling ; but as to the mechanical perfection to which the artists wrought in granite, serpentine, breccia, and basalt, there is not, cannot be, disagreements. Animals, plants, chariots, and almost all natural and artificial objects, were

* Here quoted from a note to Kenrick's *Ancient Egypt*.

freely sculptured ; and battles by sea and land, as well as an infinite variety of peaceful scenes, are found on the *bas-reliefs*. Those who could perceive a soul in these productions were unmeasured in their approval. Dr Richardson, speaking of the temple of Dendera, says : "The female figures are so extremely well executed that they do all but speak, and have a mildness of feature and expression that never was surpassed." It need not be added that there was hardly a wrought stone in Egypt that was not sculptured with hieroglyphics. Most of these—the older ones especially—were accurately and beautifully chiselled. It is stated of the obelisks of Luxor that the Arabs climb them by sticking their feet into the excavated hieroglyphics, which are two inches or more in depth, and cut with the highest degree of perfection.

The works that have been cited were all executed before the exodus of Israel, some of them before the visit of Abraham ; and the Egyptians were capable of executing them at the remotest epoch at which we can show that there were Egyptians. Sir Gardner Wilkinson says that their first introduction to us is as a people already possessing the same settled habits as in later times. He can trace no primitive mode of life, no barbarous custom, not even the habit, so slowly abandoned by all people, of wearing arms when not on military service, nor any archaic art. Can it, then, be otherwise than an interesting study to trace downwards the achievements in mechanism, science, and



art of the different accomplished nations of the earth since the days of Moses, and to ascertain by what steps, and to what extent, they have outdone the subjects of the early Pharaohs?

But the works above alluded to are only those which, from their magnitude, compel attention. There are others equally astonishing which research has brought to light. First among these (as being an indispensable preparation for free and rapid writing) we may consider the art of papermaking. This the Egyptians practised—we will not say discovered, for we know nothing about the invention—as early as they practised anything that we know of. They took out the pith of the papyrus, dissected it with a pointed instrument, and then flattened it into strips, which they glued together. These they strengthened by cross strips, also glued together, and the surface so prepared was fit to receive writing. Such surfaces did receive writing, and some of those written on in the days of the early Pharaohs are yet in existence. Howbeit, *our* knowledge of these precious records is entirely new. Till lately, it was believed that the use of the papyrus for writing was introduced about the time of Alexander the Great; then Lepsius found the hieroglyphic sign of the papyrus-roll on monuments of the twelfth dynasty; afterwards he found the same sign on monuments of the fourth dynasty, which is getting back pretty close to Menes the protomonarch; and, indeed, little doubt is entertained that the art of writing on papyrus was understood as early as the days of

Menes himself. The fruits of investigation in this, as in many other subjects, are truly most marvellous. Instead of exhibiting the rise and progress of any branches of knowledge, they tend to prove that nothing had any rise or progress, but that everything is referable to the very earliest dates. The experience of the Egyptologist must teach him to reverse the observation of Topsy, and to "s'pect that nothing growed," but that as soon as men were planted on the banks of the Nile, they were already the cleverest men that ever lived, endowed with more knowledge and more power than their successors for centuries and centuries could attain to. Their system of writing, also, is found to have been complete from the very first. They not only wrote, but they had a passion for writing, as the learned of these latter days have, to their great delight, found out. Every surface that would receive hieroglyphics was covered with inscriptions. Rocks, stones, walls, furniture, implements, coffins, tombs, as well as the papyri, were all left in a condition to tell their wondrous tales; and, *mirabile dictu!* we did not know till about fifty years ago that they had any tale to tell! Yes: for about fifty years only we have known that they had an accessible meaning; and they have been there, some of them, for fifty centuries, challenging the regard of races, which nevertheless grew more and more darkened, until at last the vision was sealed up, the oracles were dumb, and in the very midst of copious flashing light men walked in a vain shadow.



By surpassing patience and penetration the key to the enigmas was at last rediscovered; then the pursuit of hieroglyphic literature was entered upon with ardour, and with such success that now year by year the mists are clearing away, and such *tableaux* are unfolding themselves of life under the Pharaohs as it cannot have entered into the mind of any modern to conceive.

The well-known exploits of Sesostris go to prove that he and his people were well versed in the science and practice of war. Their armies marched from home, subdued Asia, Asia Minor, and part of Europe, and then returned. They maintained great wars, too, in their own land, sometimes Egyptian being arrayed against Egyptian, and sometimes against troublesome neighbours. If we may entirely believe the inscriptions and pictures, they were a very formidable people indeed, terribly rough customers to meet in anger. But there is much reason to suppose that the language of the inscriptions is unwarrantably *tall*, and that the *tableaux* exhibit a decidedly partial view of operations. And this exaggeration has so damaged their reputation that some writers doubt whether the great Sesostris's expeditions be not fables, and whether the exploits of the professing conqueror were not confined to the neighbourhood of the Nile. That this people constructed war-chariots there can be no doubt. Homer says that through each of the hundred gates of Thebes issued two hundred men with horses and chariots; and we know that there were six hundred

chariots with the army that pursued after Israel. These war-chariots appear to have been of a magnificent construction, though they were very light—the smooth level roads of Egypt not demanding clumsy strength. Mr Kenrick says in general terms: “In short, as all the essential principles which regulate the construction and draught of carriages are exemplified in the war-chariots of the Pharaohs, so there is nothing which modern taste and luxury have devised for their decoration to which we do not find a prototype in the monuments of the eighteenth dynasty.” It is presumed that springs* are included in this ascription of refinements. The warriors in chariots were, as far as is known, the only cavalry; and students have as yet come upon no record of the strategical principles observed in war. The battle-pieces in the *bas-reliefs* and pictures exhibit only the *mêlées* in which acts of individual prowess are being performed by the king. The heavy-armed men fought in coats of mail; but the infantry in general had quilted tunics, and helmets without metallic coverings. The bow was a favourite weapon, but the soldiers wore double-edged swords and daggers, and carried shields more or less cumbrous according to the class of troops. They used also javelins, spears, and pikes. The light

* Mr Kenrick should, it is thought, have made an exception in regard to springs, as we understand that appliance. Some means certainly were used for mitigating the jolting of the chariot; but the elaborate description of chariots by Sir G. Wilkinson, which has been examined since the observation in the text was written, gives no countenance to the supposition that the vehicles were set on metallic springs.

troops had darts and slings. The charioteers wielded maces and battle-axes. Siege operations were sometimes executed : the assailants advanced by a passage covered with boards, and pushed huge spears, worked each by a squad of men from the approaches, against the defenders on the walls. The covered passages had trap-doors in the roofs to enable the besiegers to reconnoitre, or possibly to muster on the top and shoot from a vantage-point. Scaling-ladders and all the arts of escalade were perfectly understood. The battering-ram was a common expedient ; and the Egyptians, being such adepts in quarrying, were not slow to attach the miner to an obstructive wall, and bring it scientifically down. There is only one representation of a naval combat, where the fight is by soldiers on board ship ; in this each mast-head has a basket with an archer in it run up.

According to the present state of Egyptian science, the great flourishes about victories were not borne out by corresponding attention to, or knowledge of, the art of war ; but it is much safer to mention what the Pharaohs and their people did, than what they did *not*, for research is so fruitful that the discovery of to-morrow may contradict the negative of to-day. If we were to find that they had been using Armstrong guns, the circumstance would not be more astonishing than many that have already come to light.

The proficiency of the Egyptians in mathematical science has not yet been defined. In proof of their having been foremost in this as in most, we have the

testimony of the Greek authors, and the fact that the ancient mathematicians whom we revere as the fathers of geometry went to Egypt to be instructed therein. May it not indeed be now admitted that the regions which we have been fond of designating as the cradles of the arts and sciences were second-hand cradles? Our former belief and doctrine were that "the arts of War and Peace" had risen in the Isles of Greece, as Byron sang. Some rudimentary knowledge was ascribed to Egypt; but Greece was credited with the first cultivation of art and science from their very elements. Yet before Greece was, the arts were ripe and old. Though the nations at large were in darkness, though Greece was at its hornbook, there sat on the other side of the Levant sea a power already at her meridian—in wisdom pre-eminent, in works a giant!

Land-surveying, an art resting on geometry, the Egyptians undoubtedly understood, since Joshua took away with him sufficient skill to divide the Holy Land after he had conquered it. It is on record that they made maps. They were also most observant astronomers, watching the periods of planets and constellations, and calculating eclipses. The roundity of the earth, the sun's central place in our system, the obliquity of the ecliptic, the scarry composition of the Milky Way, and the borrowed light of the moon, are thought by Wilkinson * to have been no secrets to them. In dividing time they were very

* See Appendix II. chap. vii. of Wilkinson's *Excursions*.

accurate. The true length of the year appears to have been known by them at a very early period, and Mr Kenrick thinks that the precession of the equinoxes was also a fact understood by them. Records were made every day of the rising and setting of stars, and particular influences were believed to proceed from these positions and conjunctions of the heavenly bodies: moreover, the priests claimed the power of prophecy through astral motions. The true meridian had been correctly ascertained before the first pyramid was built, and there were clocks and dials for measuring time. The cubit was the established unit of linear measure—being 1.707 feet of English measure; but the unit of weight is not known, although, of course, they had weights. Arithmetical notation and calculation they managed less cleverly than the Arabians,* and (what is certainly astonishing among so many refinements) their money was in gold and silver rings estimated by weight. They had both the decimal and duodecimal modes of calculation from the earliest times, but there is no appearance of algebra; and notwithstanding the immense mechanical power which they could bring into operation, it cannot be ascertained that they understood the philosophy of what are called the mechanical powers.

What has been written concerning irrigation is

* There have been writers who asserted that the Arabians learned their notation from the Egyptians; but this belief is getting old-fashioned. Twenty years make a striking difference in Egyptology.


sufficient to show how interested the Egyptians were about agriculture. Corn and Egypt are so associated in the minds of most of us, that the connection is proverbial. Nature did astonishingly for Egypt, giving her a fruitful soil and the swelling Nile ; and yet her gift would have been useless if she had not raised there a highly intelligent, enterprising people. The Nile, left to its natural channels and its natural ebb and flow, would fertilise but a fraction of what had become corn-bearing Egypt in patriarchal times. The elements of plenty are always there, but they want the regulating hand of man to fructify them. The means of making the land bear were very different from those which are approved in Europe ; hoeing almost sufficed for turning the soil, instead of ploughing : once the river had risen, nature had done her part toward production ; and art and skill were applied to the retention and dispersion of the waters. No manuring, no management of the soil, was necessary ; husbandry was almost entirely proved in regulating irrigation, and it was practised with surpassing effect.

After corn, flax seems to have been the chief crop ; and with this the Egyptians wrought not by halves nor rudely, but, according to their wont, in the highest style. When Joseph first found favour in the eyes of Pharaoh, he had the monarch's own ring put on his hand, a chain of gold thrown over his neck, and a vesture of *fine linen* given to array his person. Now, what one age may call fine another may call coarse ;

the epithet alone, therefore, does not carry much weight ; but it is a fact that the linen of Egypt was celebrated all over the world ; and, what is more, it may be seen and handled to this day, for the mummies were nearly all wrapped in it, and the wrappings are in excellent preservation. Mummy-cloths do not, of course, represent the finest linen, but we have a clear idea conveyed by Pliny of what was considered *fine* in the days of King Amasis ; that is, six hundred years B.C. Each single thread of a certain garment sent to Lindus by King Amasis was composed of 365 minor threads twisted together, so that Egyptian fineness was fine indeed. Not only was linen spun, but it was dyed and richly embroidered in the very earliest times. So far as we can trace, however, this work was all done by hand. And here it may be well to note that all the workmanship of which the Israelites in their wanderings between Egypt and Canaan showed themselves capable was due to the teaching of the Egyptians ; and any one who will refer to the embellishment of the holy tabernacle, and to the vestments of the high priest in the sacred books, will see in how many ornamental arts Egypt must have been accomplished. The spoil which Israel got from the natives in their flight consisted of jewels of silver and jewels of gold ; and these jewels, it turns out, were very unlike what the country was in the habit of producing if they were not beautifully wrought. Cutting, polishing, and setting precious stones was done in excellent style by Egyptian lapidaries.

Emeralds were found in the neighbouring deserts. These they cut and polished beautifully, and learned to imitate with great success in glass. But all the foreign gems of the East were known, and quantities of them acquired. Egypt had its gold and silver mines. The revenue derived from them was immense. The gold was dug and separated with very great labour and skill; the silver would seem to have been more simply procured. Besides these precious metals, they also found copper, lead, and iron near the Red Sea. It is uncertain whether they could temper steel, but Wilkinson thinks that they could; and he very fairly says that, whether they could steel iron or not, they certainly had some secret equally profound and equally useful, by means of which their exquisite chiselling was achieved. There is enough of negative proof that they were familiar with steel, since they wrought sculpture which, as far as we know, nothing but steel could effect.


The most curious, if not the most useful, of the arts of Egypt, was that by which they disposed of their dead. Let us not tarry now to inquire into the belief or fancy which urged them to the practice, nor into the remarkable ceremonies with which funerals were solemnised, but let us regard mummification simply as an art. It was, then, the will of the Egyptians to have their bodies, or the principal portions of them, preserved as long as possible from decay; and this was effected so successfully, that the sight-seer of to-day may examine the corpses of men and women



over whom thousands upon thousands of years have rolled without bringing to them corruption, or depriving them of the human form. Indeed we know of no limit to the endurance of the mummy if left in Egypt, the climate for which it was prepared. The processes (for there were three processes) of embalming required from two to three months to complete them. The body was never embalmed whole. Some portions were always removed, and not always, there is reason to suppose, preserved; but commonly the separated portions were preserved by themselves and placed in jars. The exterior body was then filled with myrrh, cassia, and other gums, and after that saturated with natron. Then there was a marvellous swathing of the embalmed form, so artistically executed that professional bandagers of the present day are lost in admiration of its excellence. "According to Dr Granville there is not a single form of bandage known to modern surgery, of which examples are not seen in the swathings of the Egyptian mummies. The strips of linen have been found extending to 1000 yards in length. Rossellini gives a similar testimony to the wonderful variety and skill with which the bandages have been applied and interlaced."* The exclusion of the air from the surface of the body was the object of this patient labour, and every proper expedient was resorted to to make the cerements fit tightly. Not the large limbs only, but the fingers and toes, have been separately bandaged

* Kenrick's Ancient Egypt.


in the more elaborate mummies. The body was generally labelled, having its card, so to speak, placed within the linen folds, and generally on the breast. The identification was usually a plate of metal engraved, but sometimes it was a small image of a god, or an animal, with the name of the mummy on it, and this has been found sometimes within the body. Beads, earrings, necklaces are frequently turned out from among the wrappings. The bandaging effected, the next thing was to fit the mummy's *surtout*, which was made of layers of cloth pasted or glued together till they formed a pasteboard. Before it could be called a board, however—that is to say, while it was yet moist and pliable—it was placed about the wearer, whose shape it was made to take accurately. As soon as the artist was satisfied with the fit, the garment was sewn up at the back, and then allowed to harden. A mask, representing the features of the deceased, was put over the head, and continued some way over the shoulders. Male mummies wore a reddish-brown, and female a yellowish-green mask as a rule; but the faces of some mummies, and sometimes even their whole surfaces, were gilded over. Commonly the pasteboard case was painted in bright colours, whose brilliancy was as lasting as the mummy itself. Hieroglyphics were emblazoned on it, and it was in some instances stuck over with beads and spangles. The legend would describe the departed, or include a prayer or invocation. The mummy was thus complete, but it was boxed up afterwards in



three coffins made to follow its shape as nearly as could be.

From the particular chemistry adopted for the pickling of ancestors to chemistry at large is a natural transition ; and it will be found on inquiry that the successful embalming was not a chance discovery, or an art known by rule of thumb only, but that it was as fairly brought out from definitions and maxims as was any induction of Faraday's. The word "chemistry" comes from *Chemi*, and *Chemi* means Egypt. The science was rightly named after the country ; for Egypt, through all her vicissitudes, kept alive the knowledge of chemistry, and had it all to herself up to the time of the Arabian conquest, when it became generally understood through Europe and Asia. The decorative borders found on Greek vases, and whose invention is ascribed to the Greeks, were, Mr Kenrick says, only copies from the Egyptian vases. The figures of them are to be seen on the walls of a tomb of the age of Amunoph I., a period when Greece did not yet exist. Metallurgy the Egyptians understood before the earliest period of their history known to us. Colonel Howard Vyse found a piece of iron in a joint of the Great Pyramid, placed there, without doubt, when the pyramid was built. The mines of iron and copper were in the sandstone at Sinai, where to this day may be seen in large heaps the scorix produced by smelting. It may fairly be presumed that the chemistry and metallurgy, as understood by the philosophers, were at the bottom of the magic.


The Egyptians paddled about a good deal on the Nile, whether expanded or shrunk, but they are not known to have had any great liking for, or acquaintance with, the salt sea. Some of their monarchs, about the time of the Exodus, built fleets and made incursions into foreign lands, but these were only forced movements; the nation never took kindly to "the briny," if one may take the liberty of using Mr Swiveller's expression. Sea-going nations have generally been, in their early times, such as could find very little to attract them in their own lands, and a good deal that was attractive in the lands of others. It must be confessed, although the avowal reflects somewhat pointedly on many of our own respected progenitors, that ancient mariners were, for the most part, ancient robbers, who found that ships were convenient means of descending upon a neighbour's coast, and of carrying away the plunder there to be procured. After sowing their wild oats in a course of freebooting, piracy, usurpation, and roystering, such races have occasionally settled down into loudly-professing moralists and sticklers for the rights of humanity, with a holy yearning for peace at any price; though, happily, a leaven of the old buccaneers' spirit may be left ready to rise through the lump at times, and confound canting Puritans. But old Egyptians, it is clear, had learned before the times of which we have knowledge to see in Egypt herself all that could be desired, and to devote all their energies to the improvement and embellishment of



their native land. They developed so much wealth, and were so industrious at home, that they did not care to go filibustering, and so failed to foster that roving spirit which might have made them afterwards energetic traders. When they did take to the ocean, though, they did it, as they did everything else, to some purpose. Neco II. fitted out a fleet on the Red Sea, and sent it out to explore the shores of their native continent. The fleet was two years absent, and then came back, not through the Strait of Babel-mandeb, but through the Strait of Gibraltar. Herodotus, the enlightened Greek, speaks compassionately of this fable of the Egyptians. It might do for less acute nations, who stood intellectually in the same relation to the Greeks that marines do to sailors, but for philosophic Greeks—no, no! The silly Egyptian fellows proved a little too much, and so convicted themselves of drawing the long-bow. Didn't they say that returning homewards they had the sunrise on their right hands?—"a thing," says the old historian, "which to me appears incredible." And yet this assertion, which was to the Greeks foolishness, is to us Britons, who have traversed the same waters once or twice ourselves, incontestable proof that the Egyptians did verily double the Cape of Good Hope. They anchored successively at two convenient places, landed, and sowed corn, and remained to reap the same; then set sail again, and finally steered in triumph through the Pillars of Hercules, and eastward along the Mediterranean. Any one looking at

our maps of ancient geography may see one of them subscribed *orbis veteribus notus*, on which is shown the northern shore of Africa and Egypt—all the rest of the continent without form and void. If there had been no ancients except the Greeks and Romans, such a map would do justice to ancient knowledge ; but there was a people much more deserving of the term “veteres” than Romans or Greeks, who knew what the form of Africa was. The Greeks, young in knowledge, sounded a trumpet before them, and called upon all the world to admire their ability. Old Egypt, grown grey in wisdom, was so secure of her acquirements that she did not invite admiration, and cared no more for the opinion of a flippant Greek than we do to-day for that of a Feejee islander. Egypt did not seek to teach the Greeks ; the Greeks went to Egypt to pick up what they could.

Inland navigation, as we have said, was much less strange to Egyptians than the passage of the ocean. Their famous river was their great highway. Traffic, ceremonies, processions, funerals, pilgrimages, friendly intercourse, were principally effected by traversing its waters ; and the sights to be seen there must have been glorious “in the brave days of old.” The monarch and his princess floated in barges with deck pavilions,—hull and cabins, masts and rudder being richly gilt, and the sails being painted in the most brilliant colours. Great arks freighted with merchandise were towed up and down the stream : smaller and more manageable boats of all sizes—the largest



moved by thirty or forty oars, or by the wind on sails of papyrus or canvas—in numbers traversed the scene; while the solitary passengers, through all, paddled their own canoes of *earthenware*, or a coarse sort of *pasteboard*. The Egyptians, then, were not a roaming nation. “Their characteristic has been patient, sedentary industry, employed in agriculture and manufactures. The productions of the East have been deposited in Egypt, and from thence distributed over the West; but strangers have brought them, and strangers have carried them away.”*


Wine was so commonly made in all countries where the vine would bear, that there is nothing remarkable in Egypt having pressed her own grapes. But it is remarkable that she brewed beer in large quantities, her working population appearing to have been as fond as ours of this beverage. The exact strength or quality we do not know, but no man can say that our knowledge on this head may not soon increase; for we may come down some day on the private cellar of Cheops, or the establishment of a Coptic Allsopp, and find the original of the X's to have been hieroglyphics emblazoned on the barrels. One *must* credit these people, too, with having done their brewing as well as they did everything else. Nothing but potent stuff can have sufficed for the fellows who built the Pyramids; and if ever we do come upon one of their ale-vats, we shall find the liquor has body in it still. There would be something sensa-

* Kenrick.

tional in tasting home-brewed, that has been in wood since the Deluge! Misraim's Entire.

Glass was manufactured in all its varieties. We find sculptures of glass-blowing; and the bottles, vases, &c., may yet be seen. Sir Gardner Wilkinson says that the Egyptians cut, ground, and engraved glass, and had even the art of introducing gold between two surfaces of the substance. He also says that they imitated, with glass, pearls and precious stones.

It was supposed until recently that the Egyptians were not very musical; but Time, which is continually raising this people in estimation, has shown that they were fond of music, and that they understood its influence on the spirit. A farther acquaintance with the monuments has discovered them playing in concert, the leader beating time by clapping his hands. It is thus clear that they understood the laws of harmony. They had their sacred music, domestic music, and military music. The lyre, harp, and flutes were played when the high priest offered incense, and the priests at the same time sang a song called the *Pæan*, which word, Wilkinson says, is Egyptian. For festive music, guitars, single and double pipes, and castanets, were added to the above. Trumpets, drums, and tambourines, with cymbals and other noisy contrivances, made a crash in the presence of troops. The harp seems to have been the instrument most in repute. There were various kinds of them, as the lyre, sambuc, ashur; but some resembled the



modern harp, and were very complete, having as many as twenty-two strings. We may not claim for Egypt the invention of this instrument, since we know that Jubal, a descendant of Cain, "is the father of all those who handle the harp and organ ;" but there can be no doubt that she perfected the instrument, and that the harps which were afterwards hanged upon a tree when the minstrels faltered at singing the Lord's song in a strange land, were of a pattern derived from Egypt, memorials of another captivity. The superiority of the Egyptian lyre to the Greek is quite admitted ; indeed the Egyptian instruments generally were superior, and they were made with that daintiness which shows them to have been favourite toys with the rich, not simply professional implements. The woods were often rare and costly, sought out in distant countries ; some were painted, some inlaid, some covered with coloured or ornamental leather. Parts of them are elaborately carved. The use of catgut for strings was well understood.

Pythagoras and many other studious Greeks learned the science of music in Egypt, and refugees from Egypt were encouraged in Greece as teachers of music. The Alexandrians had the character of being the most skilful and scientific players. Philosophic students of music hold that in any country great progress has been made in the science when, having passed through the ruder stages of drumming, clashing, and blowing, performers have come to understand

the extraction of harmonious sounds from an instrument of many strings, and the multiplication of notes by shortening the strings upon the neck of an instrument. Now this the Egyptians thoroughly understood. The harp, lyre, and guitar are found represented in every conceivable form, adapted to stand on the floor, to be suspended from the neck, to be carried over the shoulder, to be held up by the hands which are to play it, to be rested on a single leg, to be raised on a table, to be held under the left arm like a bagpipe. In Bruce's Travels,* he, speaking of harps in a tomb at Thebes, says : "They overturn all the accounts hitherto given of the earliest state of music and musical instruments in the East, and are, altogether, in their form, ornaments, and compass, an incontestable proof, stronger than a thousand Greek quotations, that geometry, drawing, mechanics, and music were at the greatest perfection when this instrument was made ; and that the period from which we date the invention of these arts was only the beginning of the era of their restoration." The Spanish castanet had its origin in Egypt, where, however, it was made of metal instead of the chestnut-tree.

Nothing has yet been said of the science of medicine. This was assiduously studied in Egypt ; but there is no proof that any of the great discoveries of modern times were forestalled there—nothing leads to the suspicion that the circulation of the blood or the nervous system was understood. Such as it was,

* Here quoted from Sir G. Wilkinson.

however, the practice of medicine was established, and very strictly subdivided. Every practitioner kept to his own branch. There was the dentist and the oculist ; if your digestion was affected, there was a doctor to treat you ; if you suffered in the head, there was a physician whose punishments were exclusively capital. Even if you were ill and didn't know the seat of your disease, there was a healer for you, one who addicted himself wholly to dealing with obscure complaints. They had very just ideas concerning diet, and they set more store by temperance than by medicine. It is known that they were an exceptionally healthy race, the even climate, pure water of the Nile, abundance of food and of clothing, being eminently in their favour ; possibly, therefore, their healing art was high in proportion to their requirements.

Of arts and sciences which the Egyptians possessed in common with other ancient peoples, it is not necessary to speak here. They could do all that their neighbours could, and a very great deal more that no other nation on the earth could then accomplish—nay, they did, as we know, some works which have never been equalled in either ancient or modern times.

A consideration of the above outline must throw, it is thought, much light on the character of Moses. Though he was largely favoured with immediate inspiration on grand occasions, he was nevertheless, like St Paul, carefully prepared for all the ordinary calls of his great position. He was *learned in all the wis-*

dom of the Egyptians—this was to be learned indeed!! Moses, however, seems to have seen that the Egyptian theory of government was unsuited to the Israelites. Possibly their bondage under royal rule made the name of king odious to the sons of Jacob; but it is certain that to Pharaoh's hereditary subjects his sceptre represented a mild and civilised sway. The training of the monarch, enforced by law, was such as to make him fit to rule a wise people; and his power was hedged about with every guard that could bring dignity and credit. If there be anything that we English plume ourselves on having invented in relation to the kingly office, it is the vicarious responsibility of the ministers of state expressed in the maxim, "The king can do no wrong."* This is a lofty and refined conception undoubtedly, but if we fancy that it is original with us, we are mistaken. A people quite as clever and shrewd as we are, imagined and acted upon it thousands of years before our era, and the Egyptians were that people. Thus it is clear that in two of our sublimest ideas, which seemed to belong to us first and solely—namely, the personal innocence of the sovereign, and the merits of malt liquors—we were forestalled by the children of Ham. Perhaps, if we could get back at all to their experimental nascent ages, we might even find them using trial by jury; but, as has been already said more than once, we know nothing about them till after they had discarded all manner of barbarisms.


* "That the king could do no wrong is a much older notion than we

Besides the curious question concerning progressive improvement noticed at the commencement of this paper, there is another which may equally interest the speculative. How did Egypt contrive to become what she was by her own lights and her own material resources alone? It is a doctrine of the present day, that intercommunication of minds and workers is necessary to effectual progress in the sciences and arts. But what intercommunication had old Egypt, or what could she have learned from any contemporary nation? By her own mind and energy she was what she was. Resting on the noble river which had won her from the waters, and had raised and nourished her since the Almighty fiat went forth and the dry land appeared, she sat serene, and thought and wrought and throve. The barbarism of the external world gave her no anxiety, raised no interest in her, did not retard her progress. She knew that she possessed the true secret of subduing the earth, and, fully believing in herself, she did not call in all her neighbours to confirm her in her belief. She sent out no evangelist, she asked no help. She sufficed for all her mighty designs; it may be said that she rose and flourished and fell alone: almost it may be added, that wisdom died with her. The time that has elapsed since her grandest age, has not availed to bring all the arts back again to where they were in her day; and yet she

generally imagine—*vide* Diod., i. 70: *τον μὲν βασιλεα των εγκληματων εξαιρουμενους*, &c. The title given to them, 'living for ever,' seems also to bear analogy to the idea of the king *never dying*."—Footnote from Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*.

was separated from Europe and from Asia by no very formidable barriers. Greece, when she began to understand her mission, found no difficulty in sending a sprinkling of her sons to the banks of the Nile to pick up information. But this was after Egypt had become great and old ; this had nothing to do with the rise of Egypt. Unassisted, unappreciated from without, Egypt wrought out her own magnificence, solitary, self-relying. That little eruption of Sesostris's just sufficed to show what she could do when the humour took her. But the humour didn't often take her. She found nothing outside comparable to what she was familiar with at home ; the worlds beyond the Nile's overflow were not such that she should weep for them to conquer. Like the dove, she found no rest for the sole of her foot, and returned into the ark which, washed on every side by the waters of barbarism, enclosed all that was great and subtle and able on the surface of the earth.

Great and splendid as are the things which we know about oldest Egypt, she is made a thousand times more sublime by our uncertainty as to the limits of her accomplishments. She presents not a great definite idea, which, though hard to receive, is, when once acquired, comprehensible and clear. Under the soil of the modern country are hid away thousands and thousands of relics which may astonish the world for ages to come, and change continually its conception of what Egypt was. The effect of research seems to be to prove the objects of it to be much older than



we thought them to be ; some things thought to be wholly modern having been proved to be repetitions of things Egyptian, and other things known to have been Egyptian being by every advance in knowledge carried back more and more towards the very beginning of things. She shakes our most rooted ideas concerning the world's history : she has not ceased to be a puzzle and a lure : there is a spell over her still.

Besides her early maturity, and the solitariness of her career, there is another mystery concerning Egypt ; and that is the thick darkness that so long shut her out from sight. We are wont to call those ages dark wherein the wisdom of Greece and of Rome became dim to the world at large, and was treasured by the few ; but what was this darkness in comparison of the utter obscurity which settled with a weird persistence over Egypt herself, over all her wisdom and all her works ? As year by year the deposit of the river was entombing her material works, so was the cloud of oblivion enveloping and surely obliterating the memory of her glory and her ability ; and this in spite of the most determined resistance that any nation has ever offered to time and his effacing power. The monuments would not, could not, perish for ever ; but they were ineffectual to avert an eclipse that lasted for ages. It is little less than a miracle that such a country could quietly sink out of sight, and the world begin life again, fancying that it was originating thought and art, while close to the tyros lay a nation that had proved ages before every mode of human

ability, and whose credentials did not rest on tradition or history, but were shining on the earth—splendid, gigantic, palpable—obvious to the regard of the aspiring and the inquisitive. As one ponders on these things, it is impossible to be regardless of the denunciation of the Hebrew prophet* who foretold this obscurity. “The pomp of her strength shall cease in her: as for her, *a cloud shall cover her*, and her daughters shall go into captivity.” The period of forty years during which no foot of man or foot of beast was to pass through Egypt is not plain, but the condition to which Egypt fell is only too distinctly painted. “I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.” The “cloud,” we may suppose, began to break at the beginning of this century: from without came the regard of nations, from within arose reanimation and the desire to be known once more. The nations of the world resort thither again, and find this kingdom truly “a base kingdom;” but things look as though she had resolved to acquiesce no longer in her baseness. Already one sees how the highway from Egypt to Assyria, foretold by the prophet Isaiah, may be accomplished. The Canal of the Isthmus will undoubtedly lead to the contraction of the desert, so that the way into Assyria will be com-

* Ezekiel.

paratively easy. And when life, and vigour, and civilisation shall return, what great results may be expected to accompany them! To a nation waking up to consciousness after centuries of coma, everything about her present self must be unsatisfactory and distasteful—a condition to be reformed as soon as possible, and banished from sight and memory. Her consolatory thoughts all centre in the past. As she looks back with pride and glory at what she was, the hope of what she may again be is lively within her, and she can feel a trust in herself. Her reviving ambition will feed upon the mighty deeds of old, and her sons will gain strength from the knowledge of the glorious dead. When this spirit shall come upon Egypt — when, instead of leaving research to the stranger that may come from a far land, Egyptians themselves shall make it a pleasant labour to ascertain the wonderful past of their native country—then, perhaps, the world will truly understand what *the wisdom of the Egyptians* was.

And now, to come back to the idea named at the beginning of this paper—viz., the continuous progression of mankind in knowledge and power. For him who believes that his puny efforts are tending to the establishment of a golden age and leading the human race to perfection, there can be no corrective more effectual than the study of ancient Egypt. From thence he may learn the truth that human wisdom and human knowledge cannot perpetuate themselves. Great, strong, wise as she was, the glory of Egypt

came to nought, her science perished, her engraved characters became riddles. Progress was arrested, and thick darkness overspread the earth—not for a short interval, but during a very large fraction of the world's existence—darkness which has never yet been dispersed. It is true that, if we cannot build pyramids, or hew out colossal statues, or divert the course of a river like the Nile, we can use the printing-press and control the forces of electricity and steam. But when we have summed up gains and losses, what is the amount of advancement since the days of Moses that we can fairly credit ourselves with? Truly it is very little, and that little due to a *renaissance* in the last two or three centuries.

But if we, creatures whose life is half an age, may not influence the destinies of the world on which we live, or of our remote successors, that consideration need not damp our spirits; it does not show us that our labour for the benefit of humanity is in vain. We may design and build, though we may not attempt a tower whose top shall reach to heaven. Plenty of legitimate work is given us to do; we are commissioned to subdue the earth, but we are not commissioned to determine its future. That future will be as little affected, probably, by our acts and labours, as our present has been by the wisdom and works of the Egyptians. A great nation—a community of great nations—may die like a mighty man, and then all their thoughts perish. The earth is not ours. Nevertheless we have a field for labour—

greater labour than we shall ever accomplish. Let us benefit, if we may, our own generation and that which is to follow us, trusting to the providence of an ever-living Power to determine whether any part of our work shall survive and be a heritage for our descendants ; or whether it shall perish utterly ; or whether, like the glorious deeds of old Egypt, it shall lie for millenniums under a mysterious cloud, and live again hereafter to a race such as it has not entered into our hearts to conceive.

CHAPTER VII.

ABOUT HOW THE OLD EGYPTIANS LIVED
AND DIED.*September 1870.*

It may be said concerning most of the races of men which have passed away, that our knowledge of them does not extend to their ordinary lives and customs. Some few strongly-scored facts there may be, as that our Briton ancestors wore mustaches, and were so devoted to art that they never moved about except in company with some representation of heavenly or earthly bodies; but such facts give us only isolated points; the Briton as he really existed can never be revived to our apprehension. A conventional idea of a Briton may be published and accepted, but it can be only a fiction. Let us try to form a correct notion of the Jews, the Greeks, the Romans, the Carthaginians, as they were in their best days, or in any age, and we shall soon find ourselves without a true image and without a guide. Gifted men, by joining together traces of outline more or less marked, and by furnishing the connecting lines from their shrewd guesses or their vivid dreams, have sometimes amused us by




revivals of scenes in the Acropolis or in the Colisœum, or by the Sea of Galilee, but they have not been able to show that their witness is true. Nay, to come nearer home and nearer our own age, is it not admitted that we have lost beyond recovery the impression of what life in England was under the Norman kings? We have lively perceptions, it is true, of Cedric and the Templar and the Friar, but we perceive the phantasms of the enchanter, not the real impress of the men of old. Neither is it possible, the learned say, to produce now a true presentment of those times; they have left little more than a rack behind.

If, then, the generations who left the scene two or three centuries ago have become so indistinct that we fail to recognise what manner of men they were in their lives, habits, and appearance, what chance have we of recovering and becoming intimately acquainted with the beings from whom we are separated by tens of centuries? By the foregoing theorems there is no chance at all,—the attempt would be mere vanity and presumption. If we solve the question mathematically or logically, this is the inevitable answer. But it is not by reasoning that we will arrive at our truth; it is not proportion that shall convict this paper's superscription of folly. An irrepressible, wayward fact, defying speculation, inverting axioms, shows itself; and philosophers are confounded, a new book is opened, the extremes of time are brought together. For, as if in very derision of mundane belief, the

oldest race of which history can speak is an exception to the rule of oblivion. Crusaders may have perished for ever—the sons of Romulus and of Cecrops may have become dreams and fables; but some of them who saw Babel, and of the first generations who thence inherited the Coptic tongue, are living yet on the tableaux of Egypt!

Was, then, the prescience of those primitive men as wonderful as their workmanship and their invention? Did their vision pierce through barbarous misty centuries, and anticipate the time when far posterity should yearn to them with awakening reverence, and seek for their remains as for hid treasures? It would seem that it did. But whatever their intention may have been, they have certainly left clear elaborate records of themselves as they were once to be seen in their worship, processions, ceremonies, in battles and sieges, and in all the situations of domestic life. We may see for ourselves how they sacrificed, with what weapons they fought—how they sowed, reaped, bought and sold, slaughtered, cooked, wrought at trades, feasted, danced, gamed, rejoiced, mourned, died, were embalmed and buried; nay, more,—we know exactly in what manner they fancied that their souls were disposed of after death. We can study their features, dresses, implements; and so mightily has nature wrought with them to preserve the memorials, that “their domestic habits, their social institutions, their very modes of thought, are disclosed to us,—and so minutely, that we know



more of the men among whom Abram dwelt and conversed in Egypt, than of our own British and Saxon ancestors."*

Carving and inscribing seem to have been the besetting infirmity of the ancient Egyptians. The desire of the diminutive, bandy-legged, noseless, Plantagenet Montmorency Smith, to be photographed, front and profile, and in all conceivable ungraceful attitudes, in every city of Europe, is not stronger than was the inclination of an old Memphite or Theban to carve out in detail, to paint, or to describe in writing, his form and semblance, as on different occasions he went through the employments of his life. His processes did not admit of seizing sudden expressions or effects; but if he did not catch Cynthias of the minute, he gave typical Cynthias and types of every class of human beings—of the animals or things with which they occupied themselves, and examples of the manner in which they operated. If they consecrated a temple or stuck a pig—if they held a symposium or pickled a mummy—if they danced or hunted, ate or fought—the style in which the thing was done was stamped imperishably. When the time comes for speaking of their burials and tombs, reasons will be given for much of this zeal in chiselling and limning. But there is much to say, and space is not *à discretion*, therefore order must be observed, or we have no chance of fulfilling our design. So we will assign a

* Osburn's Monumental History, end of vol. i.

place to each division of the subject, and the first place is due to the great Pharaoh ; let us therefore contemplate THE KING.

Absolute power as executive—entire personal submission to the laws—this was the strange combination which characterised the office of a Pharaoh. All the vigour of despotism in the governor, all possible safeguards for the governed ; the monarch irresponsible to any, and yet so thoroughly restrained and advised that no man doubted his piety, justice, and discretion. And how was this brought about ? Not by finely-spun theories inoperative in practice ; not by intricate constitutional checks which in one age might enable the ruler to set at nought the rights and wishes of his people, and in another might transfer the whole power of the State to the lowest stratum of the populace, and so reduce the sovereign to a mere puppet ; not by the institution of an antagonism, according to which it was the instinct of either side, governor or governed, to encroach on the liberties or prerogatives of the other ; but by a far more refined and yet simpler method—simpler in itself, but possible for only a refined, highly-civilised people. The nation, in times beyond our ken, had made up its mind about the qualities of its ruler, and took its measures for securing such a one as should realise its ideal. The leaders knew the fallibility of checks and constitutions—perhaps they knew it by experience—and went nearer to the root of the matter, and looked for their security in the mind and disposition and

life of the king. Their requirements call up the words of Cowper—

“I venerate the man whose heart is warm,
Whose words are pure, whose doctrine and whose life
Coincident exhibit lucid proof
That he is honest in the sacred cause.”

Let not any ardent purist, however, suppose that this hints in the darkest manner at competitive examinations: let us keep in mind that the aim of the Egyptians was far higher than simply to counter-check evil; they aspired to, and laboured for, positive good. They specially educated their ruler for his great career—from early youth if they could; but, young or old, they would have him submit himself to a training and a routine of life such as were prescribed for no other. They made him comprehend the dignity which attached to his position; the (literally in his case) *divinity* which does hedge a king. He could not be as other men were, but in all the acts of his daily life he conducted himself after a royal pattern, never forgetting that he belonged to the State. His toilette, exercise, meals, were settled by law; his amusements, both as to times and kinds, might be only such as became so distinguished a person, the very quantity of his wine being regulated to guard against the possibility of excess. His associates and attendants were all of the first families, and of high education. These were blamed and punished if their august master should ever allow his passions to influence him in the exercise of his office.

As was said in a former paper,* the king could do no wrong; but his ministers were held strictly responsible if any wrong was done, it being held that impropriety or injustice could scarcely be a solitary failing, but was a sign of general circumspection having been relaxed. From the very birth of an heir-apparent to the throne, his future companions, nurslings of the same age as himself, were set apart and trained.

The king must have been bred a priest or a soldier. If he happened to be the latter, he was forced to become a priest on ascending the throne; and his priesthood was not a nominal or *ex officio* headship, but he had to study all the mysteries of religion, the services of the temples, the laws and the moral code of the country, and to be in all respects a capable and officiating pontiff. On days of high ceremonial the king himself publicly made offerings to the gods; but in ordinary routine he was only present at religious services during particular hours.

The viands of the royal table were limited to certain kinds of food. The king might not exceed a certain quantity of wine; he might not consort with whomsoever he would; neither could he pass his time according to his own fancy. Hard conditions these, one is apt to think; but yet if any nonsense had been talked about the monarch being denied the freedom that was permitted to the meanest of his subjects—if it had been said that, provided


* Chapter VI.

his public duty was accurately performed, he might surely turn his hours of relaxation to whatever account he might choose—it would have been answered that what might be very good for a humble Egyptian was not at all suitable for Pharaoh; that the man they wanted must exist for the State, not the State for him; and that if he could not bear restraints himself, he was manifestly incompetent to restrain and guide a whole nation! We do not find that political trouble ever arose from attempts of his Majesty to kick over the traces; indeed, opinion was so strong and so invariable on the point, that the wise and well-trained monarch must have seen the ruin involved in such a course, supposing that he wished to pursue it, which probably he did not.

The secret of how this was accomplished—of how a mighty and absolute sovereign could be induced, without any apparent control, to walk within the very straitest limits, and to merge his personality in his glorious office—is one that cannot be thoroughly penetrated until some modern nation, as perspicacious as the Egyptian was, shall comprehend the general good as they understood it, and exhibit again the perfection of government. We do, however, sometimes get glimpses of such finished organisation when highly-cultivated dispositions, by happy chance, come together in a family or other association. We are charmed by the devotion with which each member postpones his selfish inclinations for the general benefit, by the noiseless accuracy with which the machinery

turns, by the absence of all visible moving or regulating power, and yet by the consummate working of the whole. We know, nevertheless, that there must be a power somewhere, and that it is outwardly invisible, because it is applied to the highest perceptions of our nature. So, also, there was a power, and an admirable one, cementing and guiding the powers of the State in Egypt—very subtle, applicable only to the most generous spirits, but in them more potent than the sternest tyranny. The horse that may be guided with a silken thread is alone perfectly broken; the one moving straight under thongs and iron, and evermore looking askance at the whip, does little credit to his trainer. The government of the Pharaohs was doubtless invented by the priests; the power which, like the force of gravity in nature, kept every member in his place, was in the national religion, into whose mysteries the monarch, as we have seen, was invariably initiated, and whose dictates were unquestioned by a surpassingly devout people. When we come to discuss their religion, we shall see how hard it is to recognise this inward and spiritual power in it, and how much more we have to learn before we discover the mainspring of their wonderful system.

In times of war the king generally took the field, and commanded the army. He often took the heir with him (thus Sesostris, while very young, made his first campaign with his father, and had his *baptême de feu*); but he could appoint a general to the chief



command when reasons of State should show that course to be advisable. All triumphs, decrees, and national works were ascribed to him, and the relations between sovereign and people appear to have been so good that his fame and theirs were identical: they were satisfied that he was really and truly the impersonation of the State.

Greek writers used to speak of the crown as elective; but the monuments—which now supersede all other chronicles—show that the succession was hereditary, except in case of the country being conquered, or the very rare occurrence of a successful rebellion. An election took place only when there was no heir, male or female—for a princess could inherit the sceptre. Although frequently the same sovereign ruled both Upper and Lower Egypt, these were always regarded as two distinct kingdoms. Sometimes each kingdom had its own separate king, and the two were at variance. The royal head-dress of the Upper country was white, a high conical cap terminating in a knob at the top: that of the Lower country was red; it encircled the head to the height of the poll, and the back was prolonged to double the height of the cap. The king who might govern both countries wore both crowns together, that of Lower Egypt outside the other, and the composite head-dress of the two crowns was named the *pschent*. There were other royal head-dresses according to the particular office which the king might be discharging; but what will probably be most astonishing to an

inexperienced reader is, that he often wore a wig. Modern speakers, chancellors, judges, and State coachmen may find comfort for their souls by a study of some of the monuments—nay, of the relics ; for specimens of the wigs are, it is believed, preserved.

There would seem to be a popular belief that the Pharaohs were unfeeling and tyrannical, a belief derived probably from the circumstances of the Exodus ; but it should be remembered that the disposition of the Pharaoh who would not let Israel go was supernaturally vitiated. Some infatuation made him treacherous and cruel ; but the fact that his heart was hardened specially to make him act unworthily, goes to prove that in his normal condition he would have been incapable of such conduct. The Pharaohs who knew not Joseph pursued an illiberal policy towards the children of Jacob, and the book of Moses shows them in no very favourable light ; yet they do not appear to have been personally odious, neither is there a hint of their government having been oppressive or hateful to the Egyptians. And then, when we come to regard the kings who did know and respect Joseph and his memory, their characters should form a counterpoise, and help us to an even judgment of these celebrated rulers. Joseph's personal patron, who is more graphically presented in the sacred book than any obnoxious Pharaoh, was certainly wise and amiable, and his successors for some generations regarded Israel with favour. That Egypt thrived as it did under their sway is a sufficient proof of the

ability and integrity of the kings in general; and the mourning which the people made for Pharaoh when he died, and which the historians carefully distinguish from a formal prescribed manifestation, attests the esteem and veneration in which he was generally held.

If we pass now from the monarch, who is a very intelligible figure, to that which doubtless contains the key to all the character, wisdom, and exploits of the country—namely, the national religion—we are at once in a very thick atmosphere, where, though objects innumerable present themselves, their connection and significance are difficult to trace. Judged by its outward and visible signs, this religion can be described as only gross idolatry and polytheism. The high reputation of the race has saved them from much reproach on this head; writers hardly ever mention the worship without deprecating the reader's injurious opinion of it, or without explaining its hidden spirituality. But the religion itself, as we see it, is so loosely jointed and so indefinite, that an ingenious commentator, starting with a plausible idea or two, may speedily on this material foundation erect a structure of types and metaphysics reaching up to a pure theology. To make good these words, let us for a while put aside the fancied or imputed meaning, and say what the worship was.

The gods were so numerous that we cannot reckon them, neither can we say that we have now got, or that we shall ever get, to the limits of the pantheon.

Gods crop up in all directions. Some have human figures and heads ; some have the forms of beasts, birds, fishes, and reptiles ; some are compounded of heads of some of the above animals joined to the bodies of men or women, being monsters of that class the idea of which made Horace exclaim, "*Risum teneatis, amici ?*"—some are grotesque, deformed, and shocking. A pair (male and female) or a trio (parents and child) of gods were adored in the same temple ; and of these, as of the Greek consonants, it is said, "*Inter se cognati sunt ;*" but unfortunately, after one relationship has been noted, the same deities, or others suspiciously like them, are found in other places with an entirely new set of kinsfolk. Prince Hal * had an illustration that would have suited their affinities, but he was innocent of Egyptology. It was not only the images of animals, however, which the Egyptians venerated : live bulls, crocodiles, jackals, beetles, and one knows not what besides, were had in reverence. The worship of what were called the great gods, and especially of one pair, was wellnigh general on the Nile ; but the smaller powers were worshipped in certain districts only, while in other districts they were abominations, and the setting up or putting down of one of them was as serious a matter as the exaltation of a German prince is in these days—it led sometimes to furious wars for ideas.

* "*Page*.—A proper gentlewoman, sir, and a kinswoman of my master's.
Prince Henry.—Even such kin"—King Henry IV.

There were several orders of gods, but it is not clear to us how the orders were divided—which is not astonishing when the frequent interchange above mentioned of attributes, symbols, and affinities is taken into account. It is, however, generally received that the gods creators and sustainers, and the sun and moon and elements, occupied the highest places under various names. Inferior gods all partook of the nature and functions of these, but were inferior in scope and degree. One god named Typho or Typhoon was regarded as the spirit of evil. But of all these gods, two—and they not of the first order—are more celebrated than all the rest, and were of unquestioned sanctity from one end of Egypt to the other. The reader is already prepared for the famous names Osiris and Isis. The popular legend concerning them is that there was jealousy between Typho and Osiris; that Typho, by a manoeuvre which recalls the ballad of the “Old Oak Chest,” or the story of “The Fisherman and the Genie” in the ‘Thousand and One Nights,’ entrapped Osiris into a box, and, god as he was, confined him in the heart of a tree, whence Isis got him out and carried him to Buto in the month Tybi (27th of December to 26th of January), and there concealed him; but Typho, whose delight it appears to have been of a shiny night at that season of the year to hunt in the marshes, put him up by moonlight, and cut him up too, to make sure of him, into fourteen pieces.* Isis with great pains found thirteen

* Osburn says twenty-six pieces.

of the pieces in different places, and buried each where she found it; the fourteenth piece had been unfortunately devoured by fishes. Afterwards, before the visit of the patriarch Abram, the whole country was convulsed for years by the act of King Mencheres or Mycerinus, who got the scattered limbs together at Abydos. The wars so occasioned ended in the reign of Acthoes of the XIth dynasty, as has been shown,* which, according to Mr Osburn, is the true account concealed under the myth that Isis joined the body together once more. The alarms which the Pans and Satyrs felt while these dreadful adventures were proceeding became proverbial, and gave to wild terrors the name of *Panics* for all time. This high derivation, from the immortal gods, of this nervous condition, may be comfortable to gentlemen who were about the Stock Exchange and Capel Court last July. For their sakes it is recorded.

Now, after all the pains—and they have been very great—which learned men have taken to discover some consistent theology of Egypt, it must be confessed that the whole subject remains a “muddle,” as one of the characters in Mr Dickens’s ‘*Hard Times*’ is fond of saying; and that muddle (for, as we see it, it is not entitled to the name of *system*) cannot be defended against the charge of being the grossest and silliest idolatry. Then, as if the religion were not of itself difficult enough to be understood, it was further complicated by the vanity of the old

* *Vide* Chap. I., p. 17.

Greek writers, who set to work to show that the gods of Greece were, under other names, the same as the gods of Egypt. Thus the great Amun of the Egyptians was identified with Zeus or Jupiter, and in later days became Jupiter Ammon, whose great temple was in the Oasis; Phthah, a god whom the Egyptians represented as a mummy, was Vulcan or Hephæstus; Osiris was Bacchus; Anouke was Vesta; and so on. But these comparisons were fanciful, and do not in the least assist us to a comprehension of the nature of the Egyptian gods as Egyptians regarded it.

There can be no doubt that, viewed in certain of their phases, some of the gods may be seen to personify the powers or works of nature. Amun may be the sun, or, in another view, the atmosphere. Osiris and Isis may be, and in one acceptation probably are, the Nile and the land of Egypt; but attempt to follow up these "allegories on the banks of the Nile" (which are not the same that Mrs Malaprop spoke of), and they will not half satisfy as to the character, power, or nature of any deity. For instance, assume Osiris to be the Nile, and a great deal of what is said of him seems to become clear, the allegory corresponding for some distance with known natural facts; but in a while we find Osiris presiding as the judge of the dead, the great power of Amenthe or the shades below, and we are violently jerked out of the pleasant little groove in which our imaginations have begun to run at ease. There is nothing consistent or definite about any of these gods; the character of each is like a series

of dissolving views, continually, as we regard it, fading to indistinctness, and then reappearing in new colours and proportions.

The boldest thing that has been said regarding the whole tangled mythology is, that the Egyptians never really lost, after the death of Noah, the knowledge of one supreme Intelligence, almighty, inexhaustibly good, Whom no man had seen at any time, Who could not be represented by anything made with hands ; but that the priests attempted to show to the people, under the form of gods, His attributes, His creation, His ways of dealing with men, His glory, His will. Each god, then, being a part or emanation of the Deity, which might manifest itself in various ways, had many figures and descriptions contradictory and often incompatible when ascribed to a distinct being, but consistent and intelligible when applied to a quality or power. Thus divine love might be exhibited as cherishing, chastising, shining ever like the sun, outraged, averted, returning, delivering, animating, restraining. And this method of looking at the subject would in a sort explain the notion of Typho, who was thought to be in some things not unkind, he being the violent power which convulses or destroys ; but, inasmuch as these convulsions and destructions are very awful, and often connected with much apparent evil, his terrible aspect well-nigh eclipsed all other idea of him, and he came to be regarded as an adverse power.

Now this daring theory cannot be proved any more



than the tamer allegorical explanation. Both are followed because our minds refuse to accept the outward and visible as the true religion of the Egyptians. The high character of the people, our involuntary conviction of the superiority of their wisdom and knowledge, forbid the acceptance of the evidence as complete. We labour to clear the reputation of a people whom we cannot but honour, and in so doing possibly add to the difficulties of a true understanding. When speculation has exhausted itself, and the mind is giddy with effort, we are no nearer than at first to our goal. Time may yet help us ; let us trust to time.

One strong argument to support the opinion that the Religion was not what it appears, is the certainty that the people, far from being blinded or debased, were enlightened, as we have shown, and civilised to an incredible degree. Let us remember what Wilkinson has said of their having relinquished the habit of wearing arms when not on service. *Something* was elevating and improving them, and if this was not the religion, what was it? The rites were not savage and cruel, the moral doctrine was excellent. Old traditions existed, as they existed in most nations of any antiquity, concerning human sacrifices in early days. A king named Amosis has the credit of having abolished the sanguinary practice, and of having substituted a waxen image for the victim. But the religion, as we know it, was mild and liberal—somewhat too liberal, if we believe some writers ; advancing knowledge, however, although it wholly confirms the bene-

volent character, quite contradicts the imputation of licentiousness.

Animals undoubtedly were sacrificed on the altars of the gods, but even the pure religion of the Jews prescribed this ; and besides living things, almost all the characteristic productions of the country appear before the shrines,—the papyrus, water-melon, lotus, onion, fig, an interminable series. Incense was frequently used, but it differed according to the hour of the day : that used at sunset in the temple of the sun was named *Kuphi*, and was compounded of sixteen fragrant substances.*

The celebrated magicians of Egypt were, no doubt, priests of the higher orders, who retained in their own hands the chief knowledge of the sciences. Either they wrought their wonders and practised divination by the aid of chemistry, metallurgy, and optics ; or else they really did enjoy, in their partially enlightened state, a degree of genuine inspiration. The latter thought supposes no more than we know to have been true in the case of Balaam the son of Beor, who, though, like many another sanctimonious rascal both of ancient and modern times, he wanted to combine the service of religion with rewards of place and power for himself, yet did undoubtedly receive communications from on high. And, while we think of these matters, let it be remarked that the books of Moses, intolerant as they are of idolatry, and little reason as their writer had for being tender with

* Kenrick.



Egypt, do not anywhere denounce the religion of the country as grossly pagan. On the contrary, much of the guilt attaching to Pharaoh and his people seems to spring from the implied belief that they were sufficiently instructed to know that their conduct was indefensible.

A loose linen robe with full sleeves, secured round the waist, or else a robe extending from the waist only to the feet, and suspended by straps from the shoulders, was the ordinary dress of an officiating priest. He wore sandals or slippers on his feet. The chief priest, and the king when he appeared as a high priest, wore a garment made of a whole leopard's skin. The habits of the priests were calculated to secure extreme purity; and though they were very strict, they did not tend to impoverishing the blood or depressing the system, but were judged to be highly salutary. Shaving, ablution, and great simplicity of living and dress, were most strictly attended to: the priests ate neither pork nor fish, but geese were plentiful, and apparently not prohibited, and yet the unhappy clergyman (for *clerks* the Egyptian priests may very properly be called) might not for his life eat goose with onions: beans were an abomination—the priest would not look at one if he could avoid it. The restraints which the priests prescribed for the people they imposed in a tenfold harsher degree on themselves. They obtained and kept the respect of the people, we are told, by their highly benevolent morals, and by their religious lives and conversation.

We must not omit to state, although there is not space to go at any length into the subject, that innumerable sacred animals were maintained in great state in various temples. Of these the bull Apis was probably the most remarkable; but different places had different fancies in this line, some taking to crocodiles, some to birds, and almost all to the scarab or beetle of the Nile. The real belief concerning these animals is as much a matter of controversy as the intention in worshipping the gods. It is impossible to say whether Apis himself was considered divine, or whether he was but a visible emblem of some divine being, power, or quality.

The belief and practice which sprang from the religion of whose form the above is a very feeble outline, will be best learned from what has to be said of Egyptians' lives, and of Egyptians' deaths and judgments. Let us therefore get out of the temple for the present, and look at some scenes in the lives of the laity. Suppose we take a country gentleman of the period (*temp. Joseph to Moses*), a tolerably well-to-do squire. We find this person had a good idea of making himself comfortable among his "lands and beeves." His house, gardens, vineyards, artificial ponds, and corn-lands were laid out very cleverly, and in a style more or less costly, the larger mansions having propyla and obelisks, like the temples. To give a general idea of one of the houses, a quotation from Wilkinson is advisable.

"About the centre of the wall of circuit," he says, "was the main

entrance, and two side gates, leading to an open walk shaded by rows of trees. Here were spacious tanks of water, which faced the door of the right and left wing of the house, and between them an avenue led from the main entrance to the stables, and to what might be called the centre of the mansion. After passing the outer door of the right wing, you entered an open court with trees, extending quite round a nucleus of inner apartments, and having a back entrance communicating with the garden. On the right and left of this court were six or more store-rooms, a small receiving or waiting room at two of the corners, and at the other end the staircases which led to the upper story. Both of the inner façades were furnished with a corridor, supported on columns, with similar towers and gateways. The interior of this wing consisted of twelve rooms, two outer and one centre court, communicating by folding gates; and on either side of this last was the main entrance to the rooms on the ground-floor, and to the staircases leading to the upper story. At the back were three long rooms, and a gateway opening to the garden, which contained a variety of fruit-trees, a small summer-house, and a tank of water.

“The arrangement of the left wing was different. The front gate led to an open court, extending the whole breadth of the façade of the building, and backed by the wall of the inner part. Central and lateral doors thence communicated with another court, surrounded on three sides by a set of rooms, and behind it was a corridor, upon which several other chambers opened.

“This wing had no back entrance, and, standing isolated, the outer court extended entirely round it; and a succession of doorways communicated from the court with different sections of the centre of the house, where the rooms, disposed, like those already described, around passages and corridors, served partly as sitting apartments and partly as store-rooms.”

The proprietor of such a seat as the above would have had his house-steward and his land-steward, and with the latter it may be supposed that the principal business of his life would be transacted. We see him on the sculptures as he appeared when he took account of his stock, as he watched his servants at seed-time,

as he managed the irrigation, as they put in the sickle and gathered the ripe corn, as the oxen on the threshing-floor trod out the grain, and as the farm-servants stored it in the granary. Then he had his orchard and vineyard wherewith to amuse himself when the humour took him. There were palms, sycamores, and vines to be tended, or their fruit to be gathered ; and one way of gathering the fruits rapidly was to employ monkeys to help the servants. Jacko did help, it is true, but always with an unconcealed eye to the gratification of number one. There he is, well up the trees, and in the very coolest manner gorging himself, while the attendants wait below and he leers at them. The grapes once off, the kids were turned in to browse on the vines. The juice of the grapes was expressed by putting them in a bag, the opposite ends of which being twisted in contrary ways by means of poles, the liquor streamed through into a vase. The extended arms of one man did not, however, give sufficient length of lever for a pole, and hence we see a man at each end of each pole, putting his whole strength into the squeeze, the bag being by this means wrung to a most exhausting degree ; while a fifth fellow, with his feet against one pole and his hands against the other, prevents the bag from shortening, and throws all his energy into a most complicated wrench, like that kick with which old Tony Weller finished off the shepherd. The wringing of the bag was sometimes done a little more scientifically by means of a frame, and by having strong eyes attached to the ends of the bag, one eye

being then fixed to the post of the frame while the other moved freely,—being passed through a hole in the opposite post,—the whole squeezing party bent their strength on a lever which passed through the last-mentioned eye, and so brought down in a shower the precious liquor.

There was also a foot-press (more used in Upper Egypt), where, the grapes being duly arranged on their proper floor, a lot of trampers seized each a rope radiating from a knot in the centre of the ceiling, and starting off centrifugally round and round, soon mashed the fruit, and let the juice stream through a sieve or colander into a receptacle beneath, from which it ran away into vats. We are obliged to pass over the different kinds of wines for fear of overrunning our space.

The beer, of which mention has been before made,* was the genuine extract of barley; but as the Egyptians had not the hop, they gave a flavour with lupin, the skirret, or the root of a certain Assyrian plant not identified. This beverage was in general use throughout Egypt; and though there may have been a smaller consumption in the wine-growing than in the corn districts, there is reason to think that brewing was done very regularly on all the estates. Nevertheless, as in our day, the beer of every district was not considered equally good, and the favourite brand was that of Pelusium on the Levant—their Burton-on-Trent. When we remember the great facilities for

* Chapter VI., p. 257.

water-carriage which existed during the inundation, it seems probable that Pelusium (now Port Saïd) may have driven a considerable business in this commodity, as the wealthy would take care to have that of highest reputation; and the reputation of Pelusiac beer was not confined to Egypt, but was notorious in Greece. It may be an addition to our useful knowledge to learn that any unfortunate person who may happen to be what Mr Weller called "overtook," will, if he be drunken with wine, lie on his face; whereas, if beer has been his seducer, he will lie on his back. No apology is offered for advancing this dogma in a somewhat positive manner, as it proceeds from no satirist or profane person, neither rests on the doubtful evidence of a toper who had made trial of both kinds, but is the grave assertion of Aristotle the philosopher: we have only, therefore, to bow the head and believe: and we English are more strictly bound to this humility, as we have no practical knowledge of the subject.

But to return to our Coptic squire. It is not certain that he would be a thrifty man, always conferring with his stewards and inspecting his fields; and it is hardly likely that, however notable he might be, he would not sometimes amuse himself with field-sports. Whenever it might be his pleasure to hunt, shoot, or fish, there were glorious opportunities of having an exciting day or series of days. The game was not, of course, exactly the same as that which a British sportsman, in the year of grace 1870, is at

pains to destroy ; but, except in regard to one or two circumstances, the modern reader is likely to marvel more at the extreme similarity of the Egyptian sporting expeditions and adventures to our own than at any striking peculiarity in the sports. And one may well marvel, when the immense distance of time is considered, at the strong similarities which are brought home to us, not by verbal descriptions alone, but by the most spirited sculptures, the *chefs-d'œuvre*, probably, of Egyptian art, where some conventional restraint which hampered the artist in portraying gods and men seems to have been removed, so that he could give a loose to his genius. The situations of the chase are generally such as are familiar to us—the setting out of the hunting-party, the beat, the find, the setting on of the dogs and other animals, the sportsmen assisting with their bows and javelins, the animals turning to bay, the death, and the return with the game. There were Landseers on the earth in those days.

Foxes, wolves, jackals, hyenas, and leopards were destroyed for sport or for their skins ; but gazelles, ibexes, oryxes, wild oxen, deer, wild sheep, hares, and porcupines, were hunted for their flesh as well as for amusement. The ostrich also was chased for his feathers, ornaments which were highly prized. Hounds and other dogs were the principal animals used in pursuit ; but mention must not be omitted of two species of the genus *felis*, which, in such a connection, may rather astonish : one is the lion, which

was tamed for a sporting beast; the other the domestic cat, which was educated to be a retriever in fowling.

Birds, besides being taken in snares, were liable to be lulled by a decoy, and then knocked down with sticks, or more sportingly slain with darts. It is very clear how it was all done, and the zest with which the sportsmen laboured. Fishing with nets and baits and prongs went on in the days of Joseph much as it does now. The kinds of fish which were then caught may be seen in representation to this day, as may also the kind of knives with which they were opened, and the modes of curing them. Of fly-fishing there is no record, only of netting, spearing, and angling with ground-bait.

There were two sports to which we cannot pretend to find parallels in our land and day,—viz., hippopotamus-hunting, in which a harpoon and reel were used, making it, to that extent, like whaling—and crocodile-hunting. The Tentyrites are said to have been so bold in this latter pursuit, that one of them would not hesitate to swim singly after a crocodile, jump on its back, and thrust a bar into its mouth, which, being used as a bit, the gallant rider made the crocodile carry him to shore! Herodotus, however, tells us that the way to catch a crocodile in his time was to bait a hook with a piece of pork, then to set a pig screaming on the bank. The crocodile running to look after the pig, would observe the pork, and swallow it *en passant*; whereupon he was hauled

ashore and blinded with mud, so that he could offer but little resistance to his fate.

When our bucolic Egyptian got home after being afield, he took his bath, and was ready then for some refreshment, which was brought him in separate dishes, and served upon a small round table with one leg, at which he sat on a high or low stool, but did not recline. His meal, the history of which may be read on the sculptures, from the slaughter of the animal or the gathering of the vegetable or fruit up to the moment of serving, was tolerably luxurious; and probably a bill of fare might here be furnished, only that meals will be better treated of when we come to Entertainments,—and before they are mentioned something ought to be said of the thriving citizen of an Egyptian city.

Town-houses, when small, touched each other, and formed the sides of a narrow street. Large houses were detached, and stood each in its own area, with entrance-doors on two or three of its sides. The plan of these detached houses was rectangular, and either the apartments ran round three sides of an inner quadrangle, or a spacious court was reserved on one side of the buildings joining them to the boundary-wall. Low houses appear to have been the fashion, except in splendid Thebes, where, Diodorus says, the houses were four or five stories in height. "They had a portico or porch before the front door (*Janua*), supported on two columns, below whose capitals were attached ribbons or banners, the name of the person

who lived there being occasionally painted within, on the lintel or imposts of the door ; and sometimes the portico consisted of a double row of columns, between which stood colossal statues of the king.

“ A line of trees ran parallel with the front of the house ; and, to prevent injuries from cattle or from any accident, the stems were surrounded by a low wall, pierced with square holes to admit the air. . . . The height of the portico was about twelve or fifteen feet, just exceeding that of the cornice of the door, which was only raised by its threshold above the level of the ground.” * The walls of the reception-rooms were raised to only a moderate height, and carried no roof, but an awning was stretched over them while the sun shone, and a stream of cool air was by architectural arrangement carried through the rooms. These rooms were rich with columns, and decorated with banners. The distribution of the rooms of the family was various, according to taste or need, as we are informed by many examples. The doors had locks and keys—keys, that is, which could be taken out of the locks—how early we know not, but certainly as early as thirteen and a half centuries B.C. There was a terrace on the top of each house covered by a roof on columns. The ceilings were beautifully painted as to both colour and design ; and on Egyptian ceilings at least 800 years older than Homer and 1000 years older than Romulus, Wilkinson found splendid examples of what we have been accustomed

* Wilkinson's Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians.

to call Greek and Etruscan patterns, — the lotus, the square, the diamond, the circle, and above all, he says, the succession of scrolls and square within square, usually called the Tuscan border. The basement rooms were appropriated as offices and stores, and these were generally covered by regular keyed arches — *Roman* arches, as it is the fashion to call them.

Now these citizens seem to have been a remarkably sociable class, not “fat chuffs, gorbellied knaves,” that hated the long-ago-mummied men about town, who might in that day have described themselves as “us youth,” but liberal, open-handed fellows, giving of their abundance, and unwilling to eat their morsel alone. “To see a few friends” was clearly a great delight to them; and how they entertained their guests we may learn as accurately and minutely as if we had been present. We see the soberer magnates borne to the door in their palanquins, surrounded by a crowd of attendants, each of whom carried something which his master might possibly require during the visit, such as a stool to alight by, his tablets, and so on; we see the footman knocking at the door, and the servants within getting ready water for the guests’ feet; and then we see the young swells, evidently after time, dashing up in their curricles, and making sensation among the company already assembled, while grooms run to the horses’ heads. And the water for the feet and hands was offered in the houses of people of distinction in a style becoming citizens of no mean cities; none of your delf, none of your

porcelain even, none of your figured glass, none of your alabaster or such common wares to wash in, but golden ewers and basins, beautifully fashioned. After he had washed, each guest was anointed by a servant with perfumed unguents out of porcelain or alabaster boxes, then he was crowned and garlanded with flowers, and so made fit to enter the reception-room, where he found ladies and gentlemen seated on ottomans, chairs, stools, and sofas.

The entertainment began by an offer of wine being made to all the guests, female and male; and then, while dinner was being prepared, the said guests conversed or listened to favourite airs played on the harp, pipe, flute, and tambourine by professional musicians. Anon came the repast; but we are not asked to sit satisfied with seeing that there *are* dishes, and plenty of them — we are taken through the slaughter-house and through the kitchen, and by the most minute description thoroughly informed as to the preparation. There is to be seen the ox, gazelle, oryx, or kid bound for slaughter, and the butcher applying his fatal knife; and let it be remarked that these ancient butchers wore in their belts and tied to their aprons *steels* for sharpening the knives. The whole process of preparing the animals for the table is then laid bare, and we are introduced to the head cook and his assistants, who are seen to be spitting, mincing, pounding, garnishing, poking the fires, and blowing the bellows *with their feet*. Joints, *hors-d'œuvres*, savoury meats, were thus prepared, and not


a few tasty messes made with geese and other poultry, while the most delicious vegetables entered largely into the composition of almost every dish. Who does not call to mind the murmurs of the Israelites at Taberah? "We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic." The baking (including unmistakable macaroni) and confectionery were intrusted to another set of artists, of whom Pharaoh's ill-fated chief baker was probably a director. Everything is shown us, down to the minutest circumstance; and we even know what parts, when that which was thought worthy to be cooked for the guests had been selected, were given to the poor. But we must not loiter, though the temptation to do so is strong.

We find the guests (to return to the party) entertained sometimes by sexes separately, though in the same room, and sometimes with the ladies and gentlemen intermixed at the same table. The table was generally, though not invariably, round; and the dishes with loaves of bread were placed on it, the table itself being removed with every course, and another substituted with the next course. But at other times the table remained all through the meal, and the viands were brought in baskets. Wine was freely handed about to ladies as well as gentlemen; and there is reason to believe that the former even liked it, and sometimes went so far as to take a thimbleful too much, as the unmerciful sculptor has

not scrupled to record. They not only could get merry and frisky, but one young lady (and we feel certain that not a practice of the girl of the period, but a particular accident, must have suggested the sculpture) is very unwell indeed, as if she was at sea, and you see all her distress, and the assistance rendered to her—oh my!! Of course, where such a thing could be imagined of a lady, gentlemen were not unfrequently elevated —*ça va sans dire*.

But while we contemplate their hilarity and indiscretion, mention must be made of a most remarkable custom at feasts: *medio de fonte leporum surgit amari aliquid*; while they are at the height of their enjoyment, servants enter bearing in a mummy, or the semblance of one, and this hideous object is handed round to every guest. The application of this incident rested, of course, with each guest according to his disposition; some regarded it as Falstaff said he did old Bardolph's face—saw in it a *memento mori* to recall them to serious reflection; while others looked at it much more as Falstaff really would, and drew the moral, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." The intention was, no doubt, to restrain intemperance and levity.

After dinner, music and singing were resumed. These were followed by dancing and feats of agility and tumbling. Almost all the achievements in this line which amuse us to-day are to be seen executed to the life on the sculptures, the effects of which on



the mind, when the lapse of time occurs to it for a moment, are absolutely startling. Something that you saw last week, after it had been trumpeted as the most astonishing novelty, you may see to-day facing you in a museum on an Egyptian tableau of incalculable antiquity. Magicians, professors of gymnastics, and sleight-of-hand men were all occasionally introduced, the conjuring being, of course, a favourite amusement. Mr Kenrick, being for a moment a little simple or a little pompous, writes thus of one of the tricks: "We see two men seated with four inverted cups placed between them, and it is evident that the game consisted in guessing beneath which of the cups some object was concealed." In homelier phrase, the noble science of *thimblery* was understood and practised; and it is satisfactory to find, by subsequent reference to Wilkinson, who speaks less fastidiously, that this interpretation is true. Draughts and dice were much played at, and wrestling and single-stick gave delight to some. Buffoonery seems to have been appreciated by all.

Occasion was taken in a former paper* to speak of the art of making musical instruments, and incidentally to mention the later opinions concerning the musical taste of the Egyptians. But we did not say then—neither can we say now—one tithe of what it is desirable to say on this subject. The introduction on the tableaux of music on every possible occasion, shows how generally the science was appreciated; and

* Chapter VI., p. 258.

the beautiful stringed instruments which even yet survive, tell us of themselves how devoted the people were to the hearing of sweet sounds. Specimens of the instruments—as of most other things of general use or estimation—were laid up in the tombs, where, unseen and undisturbed, they were left to gratify the eyes of the spirit whose mummy, with its countless bandages, lay embalmed in the same sepulchre. In one of these tombs, the date of closing which was ascertained to be more than a thousand years before Christ, a harp of many strings was discovered in 1823. One of the exploring party laid his hand upon the instrument, and,—let him who may read it without emotion—the chords which had been motionless and silent for upwards of three thousand years vibrated to his touch, and woke the echoes of the tomb with musical sounds !—

“O wake once more ! how rude soe’er the hand
That ventures o’er thy magic muse to stray.
O wake once more ! though scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay ;
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain ;
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard-note has not been touched in vain.
Then silent be no more ! Enchantress, wake again !”


From the few particulars, meagre though they be, which have been given, it may be understood that a tolerable degree of luxury and a somewhat ostentatious taste existed in Egypt. Just as wealthy moderns develop or invent all manner of fancies, and

spare no expense to gratify their caprices, so did opulent Egyptians deny themselves nothing in the way of wines, equipages, works of art, pleasure-boats, slaves, animals, trees, &c. "But while the funds arising from extensive farms and the abundant produce of a fertile soil enabled the rich to indulge extravagant habits, many of the less wealthy envied the enjoyment of those luxuries which fortune had denied to them; and, prompted by vanity and a desire of imitation, so common in civilised communities, and so generally followed by fatal results, they pursued a career which speedily led to an accumulation of debt, and demanded the interference of the Legislature." * Now the interference of the Legislature was remarkable, inasmuch as it was ordained that when a man had been so silly as to get deeply into debt, he should give his father's (or, as Wilkinson supposes, his nearest relation's, since his father may not yet have been mummified) mummy in pledge for payment. Not to have redeemed the mummy would have rendered the debtor infamous. He was therefore thus put under the strongest obligation to acquit himself of the debt, and generally did acquit himself. The liberal creditor, not altogether caring to domesticate the mummy, was commonly satisfied with possession of the tomb. This was quite enough to brand the debtor and his family too if the account remained long unpaid; and the pledge and the penalty being so awful, it is suggested that some relation—say an

* Wilkinson's Manners and Customs, &c.

uncle—would come forward and receive the precious deposit, to keep the affair within the bounds of the family. Being too much occupied to follow up this suggestion, pregnant as it is, we hereby unreservedly present it to the etymologists, by whose labours we hope to see a remarkable but perplexing modern form of speech clearly connected with the earlier Coptic.

The design of this paper being but to present some striking points of Egyptian life, with a view of inducing a comprehensive study of it, we pass now from the lives (most meagrely glanced at) of that ancient people to their deaths, or the circumstances connected therewith, premising that everything belonging to death and funerals was of immense importance; and thoughts of, and preparations (both material and moral) for death, appear to have occupied individuals as much as the requirements of their lives. Although they had a consciousness of the soul's separate existence in a spiritual world called Amenthe, there was nevertheless some strong idea, not yet clearly evolved, of communication maintained between the soul and the mummy, as long as the latter should not be wholly dissolved. Hence they came to look upon the tomb in which a man was to lie for thousands of years as his real home, in contradistinction to his house, which, as a stranger and a pilgrim, he would occupy for some fraction of a century. Accordingly, a man of any means, from the king downwards, set about the provision of a tomb for himself as soon as he attained to independence,



and he lavished his wealth in making his long home worthy of him. He furnished and he decorated it; architecture, sculpture, painting, all the arts contributed to its magnificence; furniture, instruments, utensils, jewels, records, were stored there in profusion; indeed it is in these tombs that we find our most interesting relics, as the harp above spoken of, or the sculptures placed around the mummy to recall familiar scenes and pleasures.

Now, mummification having been, as we showed before,* an art so important and so well understood, people while in health would naturally declare their wishes, and make their provision in that regard. But although every man hoped to become some sort or other of mummy—an Egyptian being always considered worth his salt—yet it depended upon his means in what style he should be packed for eternity. Herodotus gives three principal methods, but it is probable that these admitted of modifications according to price. One can hardly realise the satisfaction of going into an embalmer's establishment, and cruising about to choose after what pattern one would "be a body," as Mr Mantilini put it. But the quest must have had its fascinations. "Genteel, well-cured mummy—very sound, only 7 minæ (£20)," would meet the eye on one side, and seem very eligible; but then the price! Well, then, look at this—"22 minæ (£60), and a perfect gem at the money. Extra natron—warranted to last 10,000 years—equal to

* Chapter VI., p. 250.

first-class in duration—difference in external materials only.” Or, if that does not satisfy, then—“In this style, finest that can be made, with latest improvements, one talent (£250).” So, after a great deal of hesitation and balancing of expense against quality, a decision would be arrived at. Quack embalmers, of course, there were, heading their advertisements with—“Why give more?” “To persons about to perish.” “When you die send your body to us.” “A perfect cure; you last forty centuries or your money returned,”—and such *ad captandum* snares; but it was too serious a matter altogether for any discreet person to chaffer with charlatans in respect of it. For the confounded risk was this: the spirit would not be provided with another body for 3000 years; and if in the mean time its old temple should be dissolved, what was to become of it, the spirit aforesaid?

Now we quite remember that the spirit was understood to have gone to Osiris in Amenthe; we have just said that it still maintained its place in the old firm of which the body had declined into a sleeping partner, and that it hovered about the tomb, and didn't forget its old tastes and habits; and we have now to add that, in the interval between the decease of the old human body and its entering a new one, it passed 3000 years in bodies of beasts, birds, fishes, and reptiles! How to reconcile these destinies? Well, it can't be done at present, but the fault, no doubt, is with us, who don't half understand as yet the things

which have been transmitted to us. The Egyptians were certainly most earnest about the life hereafter, and they were too shrewd and too logical to be satisfied with any *hocus-pocus* doctrine on a subject so important. We must wait for more light, remembering that a great deal of what is ascribed to the Egyptians, and what has been accepted by the moderns, is only the account of the Greeks, who may have wholly misunderstood the theology of the superior people whom they professed to portray. Greek speculation must go down before the monuments.


No sooner had a member of a family died than the females of the house plastered their heads and faces with mud, and rushed into the streets, striking their bare bosoms and uttering mournful cries. They were there joined by relations and friends, who all added their lamentations. This was the beginning of a woe which was continued with variations throughout a period of seventy-two days*—*i. e.*, while the corpse was taken to the embalmers, made a mummy of in due process, and returned impregnably corned to the wailing relations. After this last event, a new set of ceremonies was proceeded with. The mummy had assigned to it a closet in the house, where it stood upright against a wall, when entirely unoccupied. But the leisure of a young mummy was but scanty, there being innumerable ceremonies and domestic

* See the account of the mourning for Jacob: "And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him *threescore and ten days*."—Gen. 1. 3.

meetings at which it was required to attend. A small sledge was used for moving it about from chamber to chamber. It was taken out of its closet and anointed with oil or ointment; it was embraced and mourned over; libations, incense, and offerings of vegetables were presented to the gods on its behalf; liturgies were recited by priests. It sometimes even happened that the mummy was placed at table, as if friends desired to enjoy its society.

For an indefinite period, ranging from a few weeks to a year, the mummy was an inmate of the house; but sooner or later arrived the time when it had to be deposited in the tomb, and then there was something like a stir. Not only are the funeral processions described, but several have been depicted in all their details. The magnificence with which people of rank were borne to the grave could not be exceeded.

"First came several servants carrying tables laden with fruit, cakes, flowers, vases of ointment, wine and other liquids, with three young geese and a calf for sacrifice, chairs and wooden tablets, napkins, and other things. Then others bringing the small closets in which the mummy of the deceased and of his ancestors had been kept, while receiving the funeral liturgies previous to burial, and which sometimes contained the images of the gods. They also carried daggers, bows, sandals, and fans, each man having a kerchief or napkin on his shoulder. Next came a table of offerings, fauteuils, couches, boxes, and a chariot; and then the charioteer with a pair of horses yoked in another car, which he drove as he followed on foot, in token of respect to his late master. After these were men carrying gold vases on a table, with other offerings, boxes, and a large case upon a sledge borne on poles by four men, superintended by two functionaries of the priestly order; then others bear-



ing small images of his ancestors, arms, fans, the sceptres, signets, collars, necklaces, and other things appertaining to the king, in whose service he held an important office. To these succeeded the bearers of a sacred boat, and the mysterious eye of Osiris as God of Stability, so common on funereal monuments—the same which was placed over the incision in the side of the body when embalmed, was the emblem of Egypt, and was frequently used as a sort of amulet, and deposited in the tombs. Others carried the well-known small images of blue pottery, representing the deceased under the form of Osiris, and the bird emblematic of the soul. Following these were seven or more men bearing upon staves or wooden yokes cases filled with flowers, and bottles for libation; and then seven or eight women, having their heads bound with fillets, beating their breasts, throwing dust upon their heads, and uttering doleful lamentations for the deceased, intermixed with praises of his virtues. . . . Next came the hearse, placed in the consecrated boat upon a sledge, drawn by four oxen and by seven men, under the direction of a superintendent, who regulated the march of the procession. A high functionary of the priestly order walked close to the boat, in which the chief mourners, the nearest female relations of the deceased, stood or sat at either end of the sarcophagus; and sometimes his widow, holding a child in her arms, united her lamentations with prayers for her tender offspring, who added its tribute of sorrow to that of its afflicted mother.” *

The rich sarcophagus was decked with flowers. Sometimes the mummy rested on the outside exposed to view, but more frequently it was enclosed in the case—a panel of which was, however, taken out on some occasions to show the head of the mummy. The procession wound up with the male relations and friends, leaning on long sticks, and either beating their breasts or walking in solemn silence.

It was, no doubt, such a procession as the above which went up to Abel-Mizraim with the remains of

* Wilkinson's Manners and Customs, &c.

Jacob; and Canaan probably never before and never since saw a funeral conducted with such pomp and splendour. None can doubt that the funeral of Joseph himself, when he was consigned to the tomb wherein he lay until the Exodus, was of unparalleled grandeur. And here let us note, in passing, that there is some reason to think that this tomb has been found.*

It may be imagined that, having described the funeral procession, we have completed the "last scene of all that ends this strange eventful history," but such is not the case; there remains behind a custom more remarkable than any other part of the obsequies. Between the road over which the mummy travelled as above and the tomb which had been prepared for it, there intervened an obstacle. Every nome (or Egyptian province) had its sacred lake barring the passage to the tomb until he whose mummy sought to be at rest had established his character as one deserving to lie among the worthies of Egypt who had gone before him. There was a sacred boat and a boatman (the Egyptian for which word is *Charon*†), but before the mummy could be embarked, or the boatman would pull a stroke, the *permit* of forty-two assessors, who had been expressly summoned, and who stood in a grave semicircle on the bank, had to be obtained. There might or might not be an accuser or accusers present. If there were, he or they were bound to prove that the deceased had led an evil life, on pain

* Osburn's Monumental History.

† Of course the original of our Stygian acquaintance.

of the severest punishment in case of failure. If there were no accuser, still the character of the dead had to be examined on every point *seriatim* of Egyptian morality. His acts, his omissions, his example, were rigidly passed in review, and it was not until the assessors had decided that he was altogether worthy that his mummy could be lowered into the sacred ark. Should the sentence be against the dead, or should he be proved to be heavily in debt, the body had to be returned by the way it came, amid the confusion and grief of all the family, and kept concealed, until the production of further evidence, the expiation of any offences that admitted of being cancelled, or, in the worst case, the lapse of time, enabled the afflicted family to obtain for it the shelter of the tomb. Pharaoh himself was not exempt from this ordeal, and there were certainly instances where the royal mummy was refused a passage. By such cases we get a little insight into the moral forces by which a Pharaoh was kept *in equilibrio*. But, supposing all to go well, no sooner was the *testamur* issued, and the candidate pronounced to have passed this his "great go," than the assembled crowd, abandoning the mournings and lamentations and woe which they had so long indulged, broke out into acclamations, extolled the glory of the deceased, and rejoiced that he was to remain for ever in Amenthe with the virtuous and approved. In the entrance passage, usually, of the tomb, but certainly in some part of the tomb, was registered the whole acquittal of the dead: how he


had been able, by his representatives, and to the satisfaction of his judges, to assert his innocence of all the sins known to the Egyptian law as they were called over one by one.

The real import of the ceremony was of far more concern than could attach to any purely earthly verdict. The trial which was seen and heard was only the shadow or reflection of the unseen awful challenge at the bar of Osiris: the result was believed to represent the more terrible result which was recorded *there*. The fate of the soul has been depicted for us as much in detail as that of the body. We see it conducted to the gates of Amenthe where Cerberus is warder; we see it weighed in the balance; we see it, if accepted, taken into the blessed presence of Osiris, Isis, and Nephtys, where from the throne in the midst of the waters rises the undying Lotus, bearing on the margin of its blossom the four Genii; we see it, if rejected, quailing before the sceptre of Osiris, inclined towards it in token of condemnation, and doomed to return to earth under the form of a pig, or some other unclean animal. "Placed in a boat, it is removed, under the charge of two monkeys, from the precincts of Amenthe, all communication with which is figuratively cut off by a man who hews away the earth with an axe after its passage; and the commencement of a new term of life is indicated by those monkeys."

One of the sacred books, the Book of the Dead, often found in the wrappings of the mummy or about the tomb, is a most extraordinary document, having

reference to the passage of the soul. It is certainly not yet understood—perhaps it is not accurately read—but it may contain valuable information on the subject of Egyptian belief. The wonderful pains which this people took to do battle with the worm and the elements, and the motives which incited them thereto, were probably known to the learned St Paul, whose answers to the question, “How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” may have been addressed not only to contemptible pagans, but also to this erudite people, whose desires were admirable, but whose knowledge was warped and erring. How applicable to them the sentence, “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened *except it die!*”

And now, all unsatisfied, first, that we may say no more, and, secondly, that we have so feebly and imperfectly presented a few glimpses of a most interesting subject, we take our leave of these mighty men of old of whom we have read and thought till they seem as well known to us as the characters in ‘King Henry IV.,’ or the actors in ‘Ivanhoe.’ The pleasure of this acquaintance we recommend to all who may have taken the trouble to wander with us through these pages, assuring them that it is no *ignis fatuus*, no lame and impotent conclusion in pursuit of which we would engage them, but that the wonders inside the caravan immeasurably surpass the promise of the wretched canvas which we have displayed; in support of which assertion let us close with these words of




Mr Kenrick : " We possess means for ascertaining the form, physiognomy, and colour of the ancient Egyptians, such as no other people has bequeathed to us. We find in Greek, Roman, or British sepulchres only the ashes, or at most the skeleton, of the occupant ; but the Egyptian reappears from his grotto, after the lapse of 3000 years, with every circumstance of life, except life itself."

Several learned and interesting works have been repeatedly referred to in this and preceding articles concerning Egypt. It would be painful to take leave of the subject without an acknowledgment of the information and pleasure which have been thence derived by the writer ; and a reader who may have been attracted by the subject would hardly forgive the omission, if, after exciting a desire for Egyptian lore, we should fail to show how it may be gratified.

As giving most graphic pictures of the times of old, in a free and lucid style, with incidents more startling than the most daring romancer has imagined, and of an interest which never declines, 'The Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians,' by Sir G. Wilkinson, stands alone. This fascinating work is in two series : the first containing an Egyptian history, with the manners and customs of the people generally ; and the second being an account of the gods and of religious ceremonies, including funerals. It is profusely illustrated.

Mr Kenrick, in his work on 'Ancient Egypt,' goes



over much the same ground as Wilkinson, but in a somewhat severer style. His division of the subject is most convenient, and he has condensed into moderate space a large amount of information and inferences.

The 'Monumental History of Egypt,' by Mr Osburn, traces the early history from the monuments alone or chiefly, and shows that there is a concord between the Scriptural accounts and chronology, and the order of events as they have been recorded in the sculptures and papyri. It contains a full and interesting account of the hieroglyphics, and a detailed explanation of the inscription of Rosetta. Its narratives and inquiries are enlivened with most interesting inferences and suggestions, all bold and independent.

The volume of the Family Library on 'Ancient and Modern Egypt,' by the Rev. M. Russell, is a short critical *résumé* of the discoveries as they stood some thirty years ago, and of Egypt under Mehemet Ali.

The second volume of Rawlinson's 'Herodotus' is in itself a repertory of Egyptological facts. The notes and appendices by the learned translator, by his brother Sir H. Rawlinson, and by Sir G. Wilkinson, not only illustrate the text, but supplement the old historian so thoroughly as to make the reading of the "Euterpe" a full study of the subject.

Lastly, we name with reverence the exhaustive work of Bünsen, 'Egypt's Place in History,' in which the subjects of Egyptian history, chronology, theology, and writing are discussed. This profound work

is in five volumes, and must be read by veritable students of Egyptology.

The work of the Prussian Dr Lepsius is known to the writer of this paper only at second-hand, but in pointing a finger-post toward old Egypt his name must be prominently written.

THE END.

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